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An inquiry into the
scriptural view of the

AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

SCRIPTURAL VIEW

OF THE

CONSTITUTION OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH :

AND ITS RELATION

TO THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL.

ALSO INTO

THE EVIDENCE RESPECTING

THE ALLEGED FACT OF APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

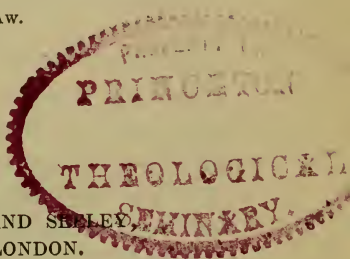
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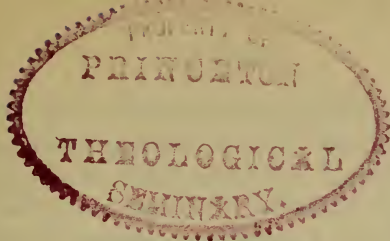
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PREFACE.

WE have of late years witnessed one of those paroxysms of controversy, which have at different periods arisen, respecting the right constitution of a christian church, and the ordination of its ministers; and it has been aggravated by the strenuous assertion on the one part (especially in the Tracts for the Times) of what is called "Apostolical Succession," and by the denial on the other part of the lawfulness of any connection between church and state.

Under these circumstances, I was led to enter upon a careful examination of scripture, with a view to ascertain, whether any and what model was laid down by our Lord or his apostles, as essential to the constitution of a Christian church; what can be learnt from scripture respecting the then existing churches of Christ, their relation to each other or to the Universal Church, their government, their ministers, their dis-

cipline ; and whether any and which of the practices recorded respecting them in Scripture were institutions to be adopted and perpetuated in all countries and in all ages. The result at which I arrived was, that no model of a christian church is exhibited in scripture as *necessary to be adopted in all countries and in all ages* : and that the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, as taught in the Tracts for the Times, has no foundation in scripture.

I further examined, whether scripture furnished any principle, from which could be deduced the duty of a *Christian* government respecting a national church : and I came to the conclusion, that scripture did furnish such a principle, and that the objections raised against the establishment of a National Church were founded in error.

This investigation, with its result, is the subject of the first Part of this work : and it is strictly confined to scripture, which is, I conceive, the only decisive authority on such matters.

But we are told in the Tracts, that if Episcopacy were “not at all mentioned in Scripture, even then it would be our duty to receive it. . . . because the first Christians received it :” that the Scriptures are “not a rule of *practice*,” “not a rule of *conduct* or *discipline* :”¹ that “as to the *fact* of the Apostolical Succession, i. e. that our present Bishops are the heirs and representatives of the Apostles by successive

¹ Tract XLV. p. 5.

transmission of the prerogative of being so, this is too notorious to require proof : ” ¹ that “ it is only the Bishops who have ever been called by the title of Successors ” [to the apostles] ; “ and that there has been actually a perpetual succession of these Bishops in the Church, who alone were always esteemed to have the power of sending other ministers to preach and administer the sacraments.” ²

These statements, boldly made and enforced by much skill of argument, produced the intended effect with many ; and I have thought it might be useful to examine these positions, and more particularly the historical evidence relating to the alleged “ *fact* of the Apostolical Succession.” The result was decidedly adverse to the Tracts for the Times : and this examination forms the subject of the second part.

If the conclusions, at which I have arrived—that no model of a Christian Church is exhibited in Scripture as necessary to be adopted in all countries and in all ages—that the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, as taught in the Tracts for the Times, has no foundation in Scripture ; nor can the alleged *fact* be proved from ecclesiastical history—that the duty of a Christian government to support a National Church rests on Scriptural principle—if these conclusions are (as I conceive them to be) correctly deduced, something may have been contributed towards allaying dissensions between those who ought to love each other as brethren

¹ Tract VII. p. 2.

² Tract XV. p. 2.

in Christ, and towards uniting in Christian love all "them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," and hold fast the fundamental truths of the gospel. If any thing shall, by the following pages, have been contributed towards such a result, I shall rejoice and be thankful.

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REFERENCES AND QUOTATIONS.

THE following are the Editions of the Fathers to which the references are made :—

APOSTOLIC FATHERS . . .	Jacobson—Oxonii, 1838.
JUSTIN MARYTR . . .	Mon. Cong. Mauri—Parisiis, 1742.
IRENÆUS	Massuet Mon. Ben. è Cong. S. Mauri—Venetiis, 1734.
TERTULLIAN	Semler—Halæ Magdeburgicæ, 1770.
CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS.	Potter—Oxonii, 1715.
ORIGEN	Delarue. Mon. Ben. è Cong. S. Mauri—Parisiis, 1733.
CYPRIAN	Marshall's Translation—London, 1717.
JEROME	Domin. Vallar.—Veronæ, 1734.
EUSEBIUS	Burton—Oxonii, 1838.

Quotations in English from Scripture are from the authorized version, the Italics (which there distinguish words not found in the original) being *retained*, and capital letters being *introduced* to perform the usual office of Italics.

ERRATA ET CORRIGENDA.

- Page 9, note 2, line 6, *for* reply *read* comply.
- 42, — 1, — 6, — overseer *read* overseers.
- 43, — — 3, *after* have *insert* not.
- 72, — 1, — *This note refers to the word blessed in line 2.*
- 111, — 1, — 2, *before* confidence *insert* undoubting.
- 131, — 1, *for* iii. *read* iv.
- — — 2, — 7, — “persons having the *read* persons having
“ the.
- 150 line 1 from bottom — Crescens to Dalmatia *read* Crescens to
Galatia.
- 161, note 2, line 4, — God *read* God.”
- 163, — 1, — 13, — gospel *read* Gospel.
- 220, line 11, — PUBLICLY *read* PUBLICLY.
- 261, note *dele ? at the end.*
- 264, line 24, *for* heretic *read* heretick.
- 276, — 10, — *εξουσίαν read* ἐξουσίαν.
- 283, — 8, — ! *put :*
- 294, — 7, — disciples *read* apostles.
- 352, note 2, line 4, — vol. ii. *read* vol. iii.
- 361, line 20, — vol. i. *read* part ii.
- 357 to 367, *passim in references to Cyprian for* vol. *read* part.
- 406, line 3, *for* ἐάν *read* ἐάν.

PART I.

SCRIPTURAL VIEW

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF A CHURCH

AND ITS

RELATION TO THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

DIFFERENT societies or communities of Christians claim each for itself, either exclusively or in common with others, the name of a Christian Church : and opinions widely differing from each other, are held and strenuously maintained on the question—What societies or communities are entitled to that designation, or to be considered as branches of the Church of Christ ? Nor are men agreed as to the definition of THE CHURCH. A preliminary inquiry, therefore, arises—what is the meaning of the word *Church* as used in Scripture.

The word translated Church, is, in its proper and primary meaning, an assembly, convocation, or congregation.¹ It is accordingly in the New Testament

¹ Parkhurst, adverting to the etymology of the word, considers it as importing an assembly *called out* ; and the Christian Church as an assembly or society *called out of the world* : and perhaps some such notion may have been implied, when Stephen spake of “ the Church in the wilderness.” (Acts vii. 38.)

used to express, sometimes a merely secular assembly ;¹ and at other times a congregation or society of persons united together as being, or professing to be, believers in Christ.

I. We have mention made of *particular* churches, i. e. congregations of Christians meeting for worship in one place. Thus St. Paul says : “ Greet Priscilla and Aquila likewise *greet* the church that is in their house,” (Rom. xvi. 3, 5) “ Aquila and Priscilla salute you ” “ with the church that is in their house ” (1 Cor. xvi. 19), “ Salute Nymphas, and the church which is in his house ” (Col. iv. 15) and the same Apostle in his Epistle to Philemon (1—3), wishes grace and peace “ to the church in ” his “ house ”— That in these instances the church included other Christians besides the household of the individual named, may reasonably be inferred both from the original meaning of the word Church, and from the circumstance that in another epistle the same apostle says : “ Salute the household of Onesiphorus,” (2 Tim. iv. 19) and does not call that household a church.

The recognition, it may be proper to observe, of these particular churches determines nothing as to their being independent of other churches, or being connected with or subordinate to any other church.

II. We have also *local* churches, either mentioned or addressed in the New Testament, as the church at, of, or in, a particular *city* or *town*, or of its inhabitants.

¹ So in Acts xix. 32, 39, 41, where it is rendered “ assembly ” in the authorized version.

Thus we have the Church *at* Jerusalem,¹ *at* Antioch,² *at* Cenchrea,³ *at* Corinth,⁴ *at* Babylon:⁵ the Church *of* Ephesus,⁶ of the Laodiceans,⁷ of the Thessalonians:⁸ the Church *in*⁹ Smyrna, in Pergamos, in Thyatira, in Sardis, in Philadelphia. These I call *local* churches, because they do not appear to have been limited to congregations meeting in one building; they comprized, or were calculated to comprize, several particular congregations, indeed all particular congregations (if more than one), within the same city or town.

This will clearly appear to have been the case with the "church at Jerusalem," if we examine what is recorded of the numbers which it contained. On the day of Pentecost about three thousand¹⁰ were converted (Acts ii. 41), which number (however) probably comprized strangers then at Jerusalem for the feast. Afterwards "the Lord added to the Church"¹¹ daily such as

¹ Acts viii. 1.

² Acts xiii. 1.

³ Rom. xvi. 1.

⁴ 1 Cor. i. 2. and 2 Cor. i. 1.

⁵ 1 Peter v. 13. Whether this mean the real or mystical Babylon is immaterial to the present purpose.

⁶ Rev. ii. 1.

⁷ Rev. iii. 14.

⁸ "Thessalonians"—*Θεσσαλονικέων* (1 Thess. i. 1. and 2 Thess. i. 1.)—inhabitants of Thessalonica (a *city* of Macedonia)—not of the country called Thessaly.

⁹ Rev. ii. 8, 12, 18. iii. 1, 7.

¹⁰ It is indeed (v. 44.) added: "and all that believed were together," *πάντες δὲ οἱ πιστεύοντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ*; by which, if the translation be correct, it can only be meant, that they all had more or less of intercourse with each other. But, considering the context, perhaps a more correct rendering would be—"and all that believed were for the same *thing*"—i. e. pursued the same object.

¹¹ "The Church" in this place may mean, either the universal church,

should be saved.” (Acts ii. 47). At a later period, when Peter had preached on the occasion of healing the cripple at the gate of the temple (Acts iii.), “many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand” (Acts iv. 4). Even this number was afterwards increased: for “believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women” (Acts v. 14). The number of Christians, therefore, at Jerusalem must have greatly exceeded five thousand, when, at a subsequent period, “there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem.” That church consisting of so many thousand believers, obviously had no building in which they could all meet together.

Further with regard to the church of Ephesus—St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, written ¹ after the great progress of the gospel in that city recorded in the first twenty verses of xix. Acts, sends salutations to the church of Corinth from Aquila and Priscilla “with the church which is in their house” as well as from “the churches of Asia” (1 Cor. xvi. 19), of which the church of Ephesus was one.² The church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, we may therefore infer, was a particular congregation, not comprising all the disciples then at Ephesus—a portion of the then church of that city.

Each of these local churches constituted one body,

or the body of Christians then at Jerusalem. It is not material to our inquiry which is the meaning.

¹ See Appendix I.

² See Rev. i. 11.

as is implied in the name of *church* given to them. But I cannot discover in Scripture; that any two or more of them were, at this early period, united together into one church for the country, province, or district in which they were situated. Each is denominated the church at, of, or in, a particular *city* or *town*, or the church of *its inhabitants*—not the church of, at, or in, a country, province, or district. We have “the church which was at Jerusalem” (Acts viii. 1.), and “the CHURCHES of Judea” (Gal. i. 22. and See Acts ix. 31): but we do not find the *church* of Judea. We have an epistle addressed to “the CHURCHES of Galatia; and they are mentioned in another epistle (1 Cor. xvi. 1.): but the expression *church* of Galatia no where occurs. We have two epistles addressed to “the church of the Thessalonians,” i.e., of the Christians in Thessalonica; another “to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons,” a description obviously of the *church* at Philippi—both Thessalonica and Philippi being cities of Macedonia—and in another place we read of the “CHURCHES of Macedonia” (2 Cor. viii. 1.); but no mention is made of *the church* of Macedonia. We read also of “the church that was at Antioch” (Acts xiii. 1.); and of St. Paul going “through Syria” (of which Antioch was the capital) “and Cilicia confirming the CHURCHES” (Acts xv. 41): but not of the *church* of Syria. The churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea,

are enumerated as “the seven churches which are in Asia” (Rev. i. 11.) ; and the apostle John was directed to send separate epistles to each of these churches (Rev. ii. and iii.) : we read also, at a much earlier period, of the “CHURCHES of Asia” (1 Cor. xvi. 19.) : but we find no mention made of *the church of Asia*, or *the church of Lydia*, within which region or district five of these cities were situated.—Yet we have an intimation, that, in some cases at least, there was an external connection between the Christian inhabitants of a region or district, and the church of its capital city : for the second epistle to the Corinthians is addressed “unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia” —And, at a later period, we find Titus left in Crete by the apostle Paul to “set in order the things that” were “wanting, and ordain elders in every city” (Tit. i. 5.) ; and generally to exercise spiritual authority over the Christians throughout the island. Whether that was a permanent or temporary authority we shall have occasion to consider hereafter, as well as the bearing of these remarks on National Churches.

There was also a bond of union, a connection between *all* these churches ;¹ the bond of one common faith and the unity of Christian love ;² a connection also arising out of the authority exercised by the

¹ Accordingly we find such passages as these, “The churches of Christ salute you.” (Rom. xvi. 16.) “We have no such custom, neither the churches of Christ.” (1 Cor. xi. 16.) “All the churches of the saints.” (Ib. xiv. 33.) “So ordain I in all the churches.” (1 Cor. vii. 17.)

² See Rom. xvi. 4. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. iv. 4—6.

apostles over the different churches.¹ But this brings us to the consideration of the Universal Church.

III. We find THE CHURCH repeatedly mentioned in the New Testament as a collective body. The *universal church* of Christ, either outward and visible, or spiritual and invisible, is obviously meant. I use this expression "universal church," in preference to that of "Catholic church," both because the latter term has been grossly misapplied, and because the word "universal" conveys to an English ear a more distinct and accurate idea than the word "Catholic."

The first occasion,² on which the word "church" occurs in the New Testament, is when our Lord declared that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mat. xvi. 18.). The church, of which our Lord thus spake, was *his* universal church—his *spiritual universal church*. A particular congregation may apostatize—a local church may be overcome by the powers of darkness³—nor will the emphatical words

¹ See 1 Cor. vii. 17; xi. 16.

² The only other occasion, on which our Lord is recorded to have used the word "Church," is when, at a subsequent period, he directed, that a disciple, injured by another disciple, should as a last resource, after other specified attempts at accommodation had failed, "tell it to the Church." (Matt. xviii. 17.) Here the Universal Church cannot be intended: for with such a direction it would be impracticable to reply. The passage will be more fully considered hereafter.

³ Our Lord himself, by his apostle John, threatened the angel of the Church of Ephesus, that He would remove his candlestick out of his place, except he repented. The powers of darkness prevailed against that church—it did not repent—its candlestick has been removed—and the place thereof knoweth it no more. (See Missionary Record for Aug. 1839, p. 176.)

“MY CHURCH” be answered by any thing short of the universal spiritual church of Christ, consisting of all true believers, and of none else. This will be still more apparent, if we consider what our Lord had immediately before said of this church.—He had asked his disciples—“Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” And they had answered the question.—“He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:” (Mat. xvi. 13—16.)—a remarkable confession of faith, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Anointed One of God, not only the Son of Man, but the Son of God—the Son of God in a *peculiar sense*, for the Jews considered themselves as being (all of them) *spiritually* the children of God.¹ It was, on this confession of faith having been made, that “Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Mat. xvi. 17, 18.) The doctrine in which Peter had professed his faith, and which Jesus declared that his Heavenly Father had revealed

¹ On one remarkable occasion, a discussion took place in the temple between our Lord and the Jews, in the course of which the Jews “said unto him, Abraham is our Father” (John viii. 39.): and almost immediately afterward, “we have one Father, *even* God”—thus claiming Abraham as their natural progenitor, and God as their spiritual Father.

to him, was the rock on which our Lord built His Church. His church then, respecting which He promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, is a spiritual body, consisting of all those, to whom His "Father which is in Heaven" has revealed the doctrine on that occasion professed by Peter—of all who "have obtained" or shall obtain "like precious faith with" him.¹

That (not Peter, but) the doctrine professed by him is the rock on which our Lord declared that he would build his church, is clear, not only from the tenor of the passage itself, but from Peter's implied disclaimer in his first epistle, where he describes the church as built on Jesus Christ, "the chief corner-stone"—"To whom" (he writes) "coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe, *he is* precious." (1 Pet. ii. 4—7.) We have, in this passage, the universal church expressly called "*a spiritual house*," the chief corner-stone being our Lord Jesus Christ, and the other stones ("lively stones") being those who believe on him. The persons, whom Peter so addressed, were not the members (in general) of any particular or

¹ 2 Peter i. 1.

local church, but “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. i. 1, 2.) To such believers, and to them only the apostle wrote: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house:” and it was by “coming” to Christ, and only by coming to Him, that they were so built up.

St. Paul describes the church under a similar metaphor. To the Ephesians he writes—Ye “are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*: in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Eph. ii. 20—22.) In this passage, we have not only the church described as “a holy temple in the Lord;” but its spiritual character, “an habitation of God through the Spirit;” and, further, its centre and source of union, even Jesus Christ and faith in Him, “the chief corner *stone* in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple;” and lastly its “foundation,” which was laid by “the apostles and prophets,” even the *rock* of that faith in Jesus as “the Christ the Son of the living God,” which Peter professed, and which both he and all the other apostles and prophets preached and taught. If it be said that St. Paul addressed this language to all

the members of the visible church at Ephesus, I reply, that the epistle is expressly addressed—not to the *church* of Ephesus, but—“to the saints, which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. i. 1.) None, therefore, to whom this character did not belong, were, though members of the visible Church of Ephesus, entitled to apply to themselves the apostle’s language respecting the “habitation of God through the Spirit:” while the expression “ALL the building,” as contrasted with the words “ye also,” is clearly calculated to include not only the saints which then were at Ephesus, but with them all true believers throughout the world.

In the same epistle, the church is described under another metaphor—God “gave him” (Jesus Christ) “to be head over all *things* to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” (Eph. i. 22, 23.) And, after exhorting the Ephesians “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” the apostle adds: “*There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. iv. 3—6.) And again, Christ “loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph. v. 25—27.) Putting these passages

together, we find the Church described as “one body,” having Christ for its Head; and for its bond of union “one Spirit,” “one hope,” “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,” dwelling “in” “all” the members—This, therefore, is an universal, and also a spiritual Church. “One baptism,” though mentioned as a sign of membership, is only one of many signs, without which baptism alone does not constitute any individual a member of this spiritual church. This church our Lord cleanses and sanctifies, by cleansing and sanctifying all the individual members, till at the last day he will present it to himself, “a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

In two other epistles the same apostle uses the same metaphor. “As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ. For by one Spirit are we all ¹ baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.) “He” (the Son of God) “is the head of the body, the church.” (Col. i. 18.)—“the Head

¹ “WE all”—not, YE all. The epistle is addressed “unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their’s and our’s.” (1 Cor. i. 2.) By the words—“we all”—the apostle denotes all “who are sanctified in Christ Jesus,” and does not necessarily include all the members of the *visible* church at Corinth.

from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." (Col. ii. 19.) The church, of which the apostle speaks, is "one body"—consequently it is the *universal* church. Its head is Christ; its members, those who have been "baptized into it" by the Holy "Spirit," who have been "made to drink into one Spirit," who "holding the Head," (Col. ii. 19.) draw nourishment therefrom and are thereby "knit together"—consequently it is a *spiritual* church, consisting of *all* those, and *exclusively* of those, who are born again of the Holy Spirit, and derive spiritual nourishment from Christ the Head by spiritual union with Him. And what glorious things does the apostle say of this spiritual church universal! "It increaseth with the increase of God:" it is "the fulness of him, that filleth all in all." Christ Jesus will "present it to himself a glorious Church holy and without blemish."

Our Lord, as we have seen, on the first occasion recorded of his mentioning this church, called it *His* church. On another occasion, though without using the word *church*, he described it as a "sheepfold," of which the members were his "sheep," and himself the "shepherd." The character of the sheep is, that they "hear his voice;" "the sheep follow him, for they know his voice; and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers"—"I am the good shepherd," added our Lord addressing the Jews, "and know my *sheep*,

and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father : and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold ; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd." (John x. 1—16.) When further questioned by the Jews, our Lord answered them—"Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out my hand." (John x. 24—28.) Here we have an account of Christ's sheep ; their character, that they hear his voice, and follow him ; their final blessedness, that they shall never perish—an account which necessarily excludes mere nominal Christians. These true believers constitute the flock of Christ, are brought into *one fold*, his *spiritual* Church universal, of which He is the Shepherd.

These are they for whom our Lord prayed just before he went forth to Gethsemane, when he said—"Neither pray I for these" (my apostles) "alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; that they ALL MAY BE ONE ; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be ONE IN us ; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that THEY MAY BE ONE, even as we are one : I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect IN ONE." (John xvii. 20—23.)

This prayer undoubtedly was heard, and was and will be answered. All, therefore, who ever have believed, or now believe, or shall hereafter believe in Jesus Christ through the word of his apostles, *are one* ; are, by virtue of that faith and by Christ dwelling in them, united together into one body with him—into His *spiritual* church universal, of which He is both the head and the life. It is clear from this passage, that the bond of their union is spiritual—Christ dwelling in them by his Spirit.

This church is an *universal* church ; for it comprizes all true believers in all countries, and in all ages.¹ It is a *spiritual* church ; for its unity is not an outward bond, but the unity of the Spirit. It is an Invisible Church, invisible (*as a Church*)² to the eye of man ; “the general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven ” (Heb. xii. 23), who are all known to the great Head and Shepherd of the Church, though often unknown to the world and even to each other.

We have, however, distinct intimations in Scripture respecting another Society, which may properly be called “the Visible Church Universal” though it is

¹ “Ye are come . . . to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.” Heb. xii. 22, 23.

² Undoubtedly the Christians, who from time to time protested against the corruptions of the apostacy, and formed themselves into separate communities (the Paulikians, the Albigenses, the Waldenses, and others) were *visible churches* of Christ, witnessing for this truth : but they did not constitute *one universal visible church*, nor did they comprize *all* the members of *Christ's spiritual Church*.

not generally (if it is ever) called in Scripture "the Church." Our Lord, in several of his parables, describes it under the name of "the kingdom of Heaven."

In one parable, he compares "the kingdom of Heaven" to "a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full they drew to the shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." (Mat. xiii. 47, 48). He had already promised Peter and Andrew, that he would make them fishers of men (Matt. iv. 18, 19): and in this parable he intimates, that the net of the gospel would gather out of the world into the visible church disciples "of every kind," both "good" and "bad."

In another parable, our Lord compared "the kingdom of heaven," to a marriage supper made by a king for his son. In this parable we have first those, who "would not come," those who rejected the invitations of the gospel; and secondly those whom the king's servants "gathered together . . . both bad and good. And the wedding was furnished with guests." These guests, who were thus gathered together, represent the visible church, called out from the world, yet comprising both "bad and good." But they did not all partake of the supper. "When the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment;" and the king commanded his servants to bind him, "and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness." Whether all the others (both "bad and good") had put on one of the king's wed-

ding-garments and were allowed therefore to remain, or the individual particularized was only one of many who had neglected to put on a wedding-garment, is not material to the present question. We may rather infer the latter to be the meaning, as our Lord adds—"For many are called, but few are chosen." (Mat. xxii. 1—14.) Whether the king excluded one or more of those who entered among the guests, the rest only—the guests who were allowed to remain—constituted the spiritual church, though *all* were comprized in the visible church.

On another occasion our Lord said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." (John xv. 1, 2.) It may seem strange, how any branch in Christ, can fail to bear fruit, but our Lord explains it. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered." (ib. 6.) This is the branch in Christ which bringeth not forth fruit; a branch united to the vine *externally* by dried and *withered* bark, but deriving no sap or nourishment from the living trunk, and therefore unable to bear fruit. The vine, with the fruitful branches to which it supplies all the needful juices, is an apt emblem of the spiritual Church. Christ is the root and stem from which all the nourishment proceeds to the members of his spiritual church, the living, fruitful branches: while the branches which bear no fruit, because only externally joined to the stem, represent those members of the visible church, who are not also members of the spiritual church.

I have dwelt the longer on this distinction between the spiritual and the visible church, because much error has arisen from overlooking the distinction, and applying to the one, passages of Scripture which exclusively belong to the other.¹ The spiritual church, however, does not fall immediately within the range of the present investigation. The spiritual church, it is obvious, can have no external constitution or form of government. Our inquiry necessarily relates to a *visible* church, particular, local, or universal. The inquiry is, whether respecting the constitution of a particular or local church, its form of government, its rulers, pastors, and teachers ; its discipline, rites, and ceremonies ; its connection with other particular or local churches, or with the visible church universal, and whether respecting the constitution of the visible church universal, we can find in Scripture any and what precepts or examples, intended for the direction of Christians, and binding upon them, *in all ages und under all circumstances*.

¹ See a powerful passage on this error, and misapplication of Scripture, in *Ancient Christianity*, Vol. i. p. 485 et seq.

CHAPTER II.

PROVISION MADE BY OUR LORD FOR THE GOVERNMENT, EXTENSION, AND EDIFICATION OF HIS CHURCH.

HAVING thus ascertained the scriptural meaning of the word *Church*, and enunciated the subjects proposed for inquiry, the first step to be taken in the investigation is to examine what provision our Lord himself, previously to his ascension, made for the government, extension, and edification of His church.

His first measure was to choose among his disciples twelve, whom he called apostles, viz. Simon whom he surnamed Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas surnamed Didymus, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alpheus, and Lebbeus whose surname was Thaddeus, or (as he is called by St. Luke) Judas the brother of James; Simon the Canaanite who was called Zelotes, and

Judas Iscariot. (Matt. x. 1—4. Mark iii. 13—19. Luke vi. 13—15.) These twelve had previously become his disciples ; and some of them had been specially called by our Lord to follow him. Peter and Andrew appear to have first sought Jesus in consequence of John the Baptist having pointed Him out to Andrew and another disciple (probably the apostle John) as “the Lamb of God:” Andrew first went with that other disciple to the abode of Jesus, and then took his brother Peter with him. (John i. 37—42.) But they did not at that time become his habitual attendants. Peter and Andrew still pursued their occupation as fishermen : and it was while engaged in this occupation, that they were called by Jesus to follow him, with the promise that He would make them “fishers of men.” On the same day Jesus called James and John the sons of Zebedee. (Mat. iv. 18—22. Mark i. 16—20. Luke v. 8—11.) Shortly after the visit of Andrew and Peter, our Lord called Philip to follow him (John i. 43.): and, on another occasion previous to the appointment of the twelve apostles, He called Matthew the publican (who seems to be the same with Levi the son of Alpheus) while sitting at the seat of custom. (Matt. ix. 9. Mark ii. 14. Luke v. 27.) Probably all these six, from the time of their being so called, became stated followers of Jesus : for of Peter and Andrew it is recorded that they “left *their* nets and followed him ” (Matt. iv. 20. Mark i. 18.); and of the two sons of Zebedee, as well as of Peter, that “they forsook all and followed him;” (Luke

v.8—11.) and of Levi, that “he left all, rose up, and followed him.” (Luke v. 27, 28.) It was at a period subsequent to these several calls, that our Lord chose these six with six other disciples, named them “apostles,” and ordained them, “that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.” (Mark iii. 14—16. Luke vi. 13—16.)

At a still later period, our Lord called the twelve together; endued them with authority over all devils, with power to cast out unclean spirits, to heal all manner of diseases, and to raise the dead; and sent them forth by two and two to preach the gospel in Judea. (Luke ix. 1. Mark vi. 7. Matt. x. 1—8.)

On this occasion he gave them what may be called their *first* commission. It is exclusively of a missionary character, but expressly limited to Judea. They were to go “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” “not into the way of the Gentiles” or “into *any* city of the Samaritans.” They were to “preach” (proclaim as heralds) “the kingdom of God”—to “preach, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” They were to vouch their authority by healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out devils: and our Lord declared to them: “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.” (Luke ix. 1, 2. Matt. xi. 5—8, 40. Mark vi. 7.) We have already seen what our Lord meant by “the kingdom of heaven,” when he illustrated its nature by various parables. The apostles, therefore,

were now commanded to preach the gospel; and to proclaim as heralds, that His visible church was about to supplant the Israelitish church,—the gospel dispensation to supersede the Mosaic dispensation. Not that they were, during this their first mission, to declare these important truths explicitly; for as yet they knew not that the Mosaic economy was about to be set aside: but they were to declare that “the kingdom of heaven” was “at hand,” and to prepare the way for the Christian dispensation.

This was the substance of the commission which our Lord on this occasion gave to the apostles. He added some special directions; commanding them to make no provision for the journey, but to claim the hospitality of the most worthy inhabitant of each city which they should visit—with a solemn declaration annexed: “Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.” (Matt. x. 9—15. Mark vi. 8—11. Luke ix. 3—5.) These directions were temporary, intended for the period during which their journeys were restricted to Judea, their native country: and our Lord, immediately after his last supper, when he was about to enlarge the sphere of their missionary labours, revoked these directions, and gave others in their place. (Luke xxii. 35, 36.) But, on this very occasion he renewed the declaration: “He that receiveth

whomsoever I send, receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (John xiii. 20.) And when a persecution was raised at Antioch in Pisidia against Paul and Barnabas, "they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium." (Acts xiii. 50, 51.) The special directions were temporary ; the declaration annexed perpetual as regards those whom our Lord really sends ; and amidst these directions, temporary though they were, a principle is laid down applicable to the maintenance of Christian ministers in every age—"the workman is worthy of his meat." (Matt. x. 10.)

On the same occasion, our Lord warned his apostles of the persecution which they would encounter ; and promised them his Holy Spirit to teach them what to say when brought before kings and governors for his sake. (Matt. x. 17—19.) But in this he looked forward to events of a later period, as they do not appear to have been persecuted or brought before kings or governors while engaged in this mission, or at any time before our Lord's ascension.

In obedience to our Lord's command, the apostles went through the towns, preaching the gospel, calling on men to repent, casting out many devils, healing everywhere, anointing many that were sick and healing them. (Luke ix. 6. Mark vi. 12, 13.) They returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done in their journey (Luke ix. 10, Mark vi. 30), the only mission on which our Lord is recorded to have sent them previous to his crucifixion.

Others, however, besides the apostles, he called to the ministry, while he continued on earth. The first call to the ministry, of which we read, after that of the apostles, is the call of one, who being commanded by Jesus to follow him, asked leave first to bury his father. To him our Lord replied—"Let the dead bury their dead : but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." (Luke ix. 59, 60.) We read nothing more of this man ; but it is not improbable, that he was one of the seventy disciples, whose mission must next be noticed.

"After these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face, into every city and place, whither he himself would come." (Luke x. 1.) But, since we hear nothing of them as distinguished from other disciples after their return from this mission, it is unnecessary to enter into a minute examination of it. It is sufficient to observe, that they were to heal the sick, and to say "the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you ;" and that their commission contained directions respecting maintenance, promises to such as should receive and hear them, and denunciations against such as should reject or despise them, similar to those comprized in the commission of the apostles. On their return they said : "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." And our Lord then confirmed to them the gift of working *miracles* ; saying : "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy ; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke x. 1—19.) Their commis-

sion, therefore, was permanent, not temporary, not limited to the particular mission on which our Lord then sent them; though their subsequent proceedings are not recorded.

We read of no other appointment to the ministry prior to our Lord's ascension. We must, therefore, revert to the apostles. Hitherto, as far as is recorded, our Lord had given them no directions respecting the constitution or government of his church. He had invested them with some miraculous powers, power to cast out devils, to heal diseases, and to raise the dead; he had commissioned them to preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, in the cities and villages of Judea: he had denounced divine wrath on those who should reject their message; and he had promised them the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, when they should be brought before rulers and councils for his sake. Further powers, a wider commission, fuller promises he afterwards gave them at intervals before his ascension into heaven: and these must now be examined.

The first occurrence of this kind, which calls for our consideration, is the following:

Our Lord having asked his disciples, "Whom say ye that I am," Simon Peter answered: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the

gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matt. xvi. 15—19.)

This declaration of our Lord consists of three promises—

The first promise is : “ Upon this rock I will build my Church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” This promise has been already considered. It has been shown that the *rock*, of which our Lord spake, was not Peter, but the faith which he had just before professed ; and that the *church*, against which “the gates of hell shall not prevail,” was the universal spiritual Church, built on the rock of that faith.

The second promise is : “ I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ”—*the keys of the kingdom of heaven*—it is essential to mark the precise expression. Our Lord promised not to Peter the keys of the invisible world, or of the world to come : for our Lord himself, long after this promise to Peter,¹ declared to the apostle John—“ I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell ” (Hades, the invisible world) “ and of death ” (Rev. i. 18). Nor did He promise to Peter the key of the spiritual church : for our Lord (on the occasion of the same revelation to St. John) characterized himself as “ he that hath the key of David,² he that openeth and no man shutteth ;

¹ At a time, when according to ecclesiastical history, Peter was dead.

² “ The key of David,” indeed, is an expression used in another sense.

and shutteth, and no man openeth." (Rev. iii. 7.) But our Lord promised to Peter the keys *of the kingdom of heaven*, of that kingdom which He had already commissioned his apostles to proclaim as being "at hand" (Matt. x. 7); of the *visible church* of Christ which was about to be set up on earth.¹ Our Lord used similar language, when He declared: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." (Matt. xxiii. 13.) "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in *yourselves*, and them that were entering in ye hindered." (Luke xi. 52.) "The Scribes and Pharisees," sat "in Moses seat." (Matt. xxiii. 2.) They and the lawyers were the authorized expounders and teachers of the law of Moses: but by teaching false doctrine, by withholding the truth of God, and by superadding "the traditions of men," they not only rejected Christ themselves, but kept many from receiving, who were

in the prophet Isaiah, when by his mouth God said of Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: "The key of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." (Isaiah xxii. 20—22.) This, as the context shows, is a prophecy of Eliakim's promotion to the treasurership in the place of Shebna, when he would receive the key of office, and have full control over the coffers in which the treasure was kept, and over the treasure-house; though *perhaps* the prophecy may be expressed in terms exhibiting Eliakim as a type of Christ, who dispenses the Heavenly treasure.

¹ We have already seen (ch. i.), that our Lord, in several of his parables, described his *visible church* under the appellation of "the kingdom of heaven."

disposed to receive, his gospel ; while, by the terror of being put out from the synagogue, they hindered others from openly confessing themselves disciples of Jesus and entering into his visible Church. Our Lord, when he promised to give to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, used the future tense (“I will give”—not —“I give”). It was not a present investiture of authority. It was a prophetic intimation, that Peter, the *first* after our Lord’s ascension—the first, not in rank or authority, but in order of time—should by his preaching open the door of the visible church, bringing converts into it : and accordingly Peter first did so open the door both to Jews and circumcised proselytes on the day of Pentecost,¹ and to the uncircumcised Gentiles when he baptized Cornelius and his friends.²

The third promise made by our Lord on the occasion of Peter’s confession of faith is : “Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Very extensive authority is unquestionably implied in these words : but, whatever that authority be, it was not committed to Peter alone ; for on a subsequent occasion the very same words were addressed by Jesus to his apostles in general. (Matt. xviii. 18.) The words relate to *things*,³ not to *persons* ; and refer therefore to general rules, not to individual offences. Our Lord by these words gave his apostles power

¹ Acts ii.

² Acts x. 44—48.

³ The original word is neuter in both passages.

authoritatively to declare the laws of his church, and its doctrine as to both faith and practice ; to make provision for its government, discipline, and ordinances ; —these things they were to “bind:” he also empowered them to establish his church and the Christian dispensation in the place of the Israelitish church and the Mosaic dispensation, which, together with the Mosaic types and ceremonies (the shadows of Christ and his salvation) were to pass away, now that the substance was come—these things, the Israelitish church, the Mosaic dispensation, the ritual and ceremonial law, they were to “loose.” And our Lord promised, that in thus legislating for his church and preaching the gospel, they should be so preserved from error, that whatsoever they should bind or loose on earth, should be bound or loosed in heaven. That this is the meaning¹ of the promise made to Peter will more clearly appear, when we consider the circumstances under which it was afterwards made to all the apostles : and, as it was on this occasion made to Peter *by name*, we may conclude that the authority to bind and loose was given to the apostles individually : so that each of them was alike to be preserved from error in whatsoever he should individually bind or loose.

¹ Its precise and full meaning, especially as regarded the ritual law, was not at the time understood by the apostles. This was one of those things, which our Lord had “spoken” to them “in proverbs” (John xvi. 25);—of those things, which they could not then bear, but which the Spirit should afterwards teach them. (Ib. 12, 13.)

There is nothing, therefore, in the passage under consideration, or in any one of the three promises which it contains, nothing importing that Peter was to have any authority exclusive of or paramount to the other apostles, or any rank before or above them. That our Lord did not intend to confer, and that the apostles did not understand him to have conferred, any precedency on Peter, is also manifest from the strife for superiority which repeatedly arose among the apostles, from our Lord's repeated rebukes of that strife, (Matt. xviii. 1—5. xx. 20—28. Mark ix. 33—37. x. 35—45. Luke ix. 46—48. xxii. 24—27.) and from his declaration to the sons of Zebedee: “to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.” (Matt. xx. 23.) Had the primacy been conferred on Peter when he made his confession of faith, surely our Lord would have answered the request of the sons of Zebedee by telling them: “the first place in my kingdom is already conferred on Peter”—instead of which he says: it “is not mine to give except *to those* for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”¹ Peter never claimed, nor did the other apostles ever concede to him, any superiority of rank or authority. St. Paul more than once claims equality

¹ This is the correct translation of the original—ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μου. The words “*it shall be given*” introduced into the authorized version embarrass the sense: and that ἀλλὰ may be translated *except* is clear from a comparison of Mark ix. 8. with Matt. xvii. 8. St. Mark expresses by ἀλλὰ what St. Matthew expresses by εἰ μὴ.

with “the very chiefest apostles” (2 Cor. xi. 5, xii. 11.) : and he tells the Galatians—“the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the Gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter ; (for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles :) and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave unto me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship ; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” (Gal. ii. 7—9.) Here we find James, Peter, and John named together—Peter not being even placed first in order—as *pillars* ; and we find them acknowledging the like grace given to Paul as to themselves, and agreeing to go themselves to the circumcision, while Paul and Barnabas went to the heathen.

I now proceed to examine the circumstances under which our Lord, on an occasion subsequent to Peter’s profession of faith, conferred on the apostles in general the power to bind and to loose.

After relating the payment by our Lord of tribute for himself and Peter by means of a piece of money, which (under his direction) Peter found in the mouth of a fish, (Matt. xvii. 24—27.) the evangelist proceeds : “At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ?” Our Lord first answered the question by setting up a little child in the midst of them, as an emblem of the character of those who should be admitted into the

kingdom of heaven. Then he warned the disciples against offences or stumbling-blocks. Next he taught them his compassion to sinners by the parable of the lost sheep: and, after telling them that he was come "to save that which was lost," he gave directions for the conduct of a Christian towards an offending brother—"Moreover," he said, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he will hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a Publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For ¹ where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 1—20.)

The general purport of the directions respecting an

¹ "For"—*γὰρ*—I should in this place rather translate it "indeed"—importing a more extensive promise—*γὰρ* is not always illative. It is sometimes used to denote the continuation of a discourse, as in Matt. i. 18, and Luke ix. 44: and sometimes may be rendered "verily," or "no doubt," as in Acts xvi. 37. and 1 Cor. ix. 10. and as it might have been rendered in John ix. 30, where our translators have rendered it "why."

offending brother is obvious. The party offended is to tell the offender his fault first privately; and, if the offender refuse to hear, then in the presence of one or two brethren; and, if he refuse to hear them, then to "the church." The universal church could not be intended—for such a course of proceeding would be impracticable: nor yet the apostles as rulers of the church—for they could not spare time to investigate the private differences of individual Christians: either the particular or local church to which the offender belonged, or the rulers or appointed officer of that congregation or church must have been meant; and probably our Lord left it to his apostles to give more special instructions on the point.¹—"But," our Lord adds, "if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican;"—in that case the injured party, though not released, as regarded the offender, from what every Christian owes to his *neighbour* according to our Lord's extended use of that term, (Luke. x. 25—27.) was no longer bound to treat him as a *Christian brother*; and *perhaps* the church also was to disown the offender,—to excommunicate him,—to exclude him from Christian ordinances, till he repented and submitted to its decision—but this is not *necessarily* included in the expression: "let him be to THEE as a heathen man."

Do then the words which follow these directions respecting an offending brother,—“Whatsoever ye

¹ We shall hereafter consider the directions given by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian Church on this subject.

shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,"—do these words import, that every judgment, pronounced by the church in controversies between its members respecting any private wrong, shall be ratified in heaven? It has been contended, that both these words, and the promise which our Lord immediately adds—"Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"—are to be read in connection with the directions respecting an offending brother; that the power to bind and loose is to be exercised by the pastor and flock of the congregation to which the offender belongs; and that exclusion from church-fellowship is the *binding*, and remission of church censures the *loosing*, of which our Lord speaks.¹ If this were the true interpretation, it would follow—either that every *particular congregation of professing Christians* possesses infallibility in this particular, and will never in the exercise of church discipline pronounce any but a righteous judgment—or that whosoever is (under whatever circumstances) excluded from church fellowship by any congregation

¹ This is the view taken of the passage by Mr. Godkin, formerly a Romanist, but now a dissenting minister, in his "Guide from the Church of Rome to the Church of Christ." But surely the promise, that whatsoever the parties to whom it is made should bind or loose on earth, should be bound or loosed in *heaven*, must mean something more than exclusion from, or readmission to, church fellowship.

of professing Christians, and continues so excluded till his death, will at the last day find his sentence (be it a righteous, or be it an unrighteous sentence) affirmed by the righteous Judge of the world, and himself excluded from the church above! And the same objection would apply to any interpretation of the passage, which should ascribe to "the church" the power to bind and loose, whatever meaning we assign to the word *church* in this passage.

Nor is there any thing in our Lord's discourse on this occasion, which requires us to connect the power to bind and loose, either with the preceding, or with the following passage. Our Lord's discourse on this occasion comprizes various matters, having no necessary or very close connection with each other: and, when he passes from the directions respecting an offending brother to the binding and loosing power, there is a change of phraseology which indicates a change both in the parties addressed and in the subject. In the directions respecting an offending brother, our Lord says: "if THY brother shall trespass against THEE"—language which imports a general precept belonging to all Christians—and he concludes: "if he neglect to hear the CHURCH, let him be to THEE as a heathen man and a publican." Then, passing on to the power to bind and loose, our Lord proceeds: "Verily I say unto YOU, whatsoever YE shall bind," "whatsoever YE shall loose." We may therefore conclude that he is entering on a new subject. In like manner, after concluding the promise of the

binding and loosing power, our Lord says : “ Again I say unto you ” entering (as the word again ¹ intimates) on a new subject—*united prayer*. These passages then are not necessarily connected ; and their juxtaposition is wholly insufficient of itself to establish a connection, which would imply in the *church* a species of infallibility never yet (as far as I am aware) claimed by any church. Had our Lord intended to establish a tribunal with authority so to decide private controversies between Christians, that God himself would invariably affirm its decisions, he would have pointed out its constitution more distinctly than by the word translated *church*, which, (as we have seen) means sometimes the universal church and at other times a local or particular church, or congregation. And, as the righteous governor of heaven and earth unquestionably will never ratify a wrong judgment, such tribunal must have been endued with a power (never before committed to mere man) of trying the heart and reins,² with a power of infallibly ascertaining the truth in all matters of controversy brought before it, and with undeviating integrity and unerring

¹ “ Again,” *πάλιν*. This is a word often used by our Lord, when entering on a new subject.—See Matt. v. 33, or on a new parable, Matt. xiii. 44, 45, 47.

² To try the heart and reins is repeatedly in Scripture declared to be the Prerogative of God. “ I the Lord search the heart, *I* try the reins ; even to give to every man according to his ways.” (Jer. xvii. 10.) “ Thou, *even* thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.” (1 Kings viii. 39.) “ The righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.” (Ps. vii. 9.) The apostles and other disciples, assembled after our Lord’s ascension, “ prayed and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all *men*,

wisdom to award such a judgment as should be suitable to the truth of the case so ascertained.

The way is now cleared for considering as a *distinct and separate* promise—"whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 18.)

This is unquestionably a promise of weighty import.

To whom is it made? To the apostles, and to the apostles *only*. The whole of our Lord's discourse on this occasion is addressed to "the disciples," who had asked him, "who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" It begins with an answer to that question: "Verily I say unto you, except YE be converted and become as little children, YE shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven: Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven:" and, though it

shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." (Acts i. 24.) And our Lord, in the Apocalypse, claims to himself the same prerogative: "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give to every one of you according to your works." (Rev. ii. 23.) See also 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Jer. xi. 20; xx. 12. Rom. viii. 27. and 1 Thess. ii. 4. On *special* occasions, indeed, and for *special* purposes, God has revealed to one man what was in the heart of another, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.): and, among other supernatural powers given to *some* members of the early church, we find the "discerning of spirits," just as we find "prophecy," enumerated. (1 Cor. xii. 10.) But in so revealing the heart of one man to another, God exercises, without imparting, his own Prerogative of trying the heart and searching the reins; just as, when he inspires a prophet, he only exercises his own glorious attribute of knowing all things from the beginning. And, as the spirit of prophecy, so also "the discerning of spirits," has long since ceased.

contains warnings and directions applicable to Christians in general, these are for the most part¹ given in an altered phraseology—"WHOSOEVER shall humble HIMSELF"—"if THY hand or THY foot offend THEE"—"if THY brother shall offend against THEE : " while the promise under consideration is directly *addressed to those disciples who had asked the question*—"Verily I say unto YOU, whatsoever YE shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever YE shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—*Those disciples were the apostles.* No other disciples were likely to have asked such a question: the expression, "THE disciples," naturally points out those, whom our Lord had chosen, and ordained "that they should be with him : " (Mark iii. 14.) and the phrase "the disciples," or "his disciples," is that by which St. Matthew (See xiii. 36. xiv. 15, 19, 22, 28. xv. 32, 33, 36. xvi. 13, 21. xvii. 10, 13, 19. xxiv. 3. xxvi. 17—20, 35, 45, 56.) constantly designated the twelve, while he only once calls them "apostles." (x. 2.) The promise, therefore was made to the apostles exclusively.

What then is its import? Much light will be thrown on this question by our Lord's declaration to the eleven apostles on the evening before his crucifixion, after Judas Iscariot had left the room. "These things

¹ I say "for the most part," because part of the discourse (v. 10—14.) is addressed directly to those who had asked the question, though the doctrine contained in it concerned *all* Christians. There was, however, a peculiar propriety in addressing it to those who had contended for superiority—it was peculiarly calculated to quell such strifes among them.

have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv. 25, 26.) "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come." (John xvi. 12, 13.) Our Lord did not, before his ascension, fully disclose to his apostles all the truths of his gospel; but he promised that he would send to them the Holy Spirit, who should not only bring to their remembrance all that he had said to them, but lead them into *all truth*. Under this infallible guidance, they would (in their authoritative teaching¹) teach the truth without any admixture of error: and whatever they *authoritatively* taught respecting the will of God, whether as to faith or practice, whether as to the laws, government and discipline of the Christian church, or as to the abolition

¹ Even after the Day of Pentecost, Peter retained erroneous notions as to the universal and perpetual obligation of the ceremonial law; but was by a vision prevented from teaching those notions, and enlightened as to the admission of the Gentiles into the Church (Acts x.) Yet on a subsequent occasion "he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision"—on which occasion Paul "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." (Gal. ii. 11, 12.) Thus Peter's erroneous *conduct* is recorded, together with the corrective of Paul's *authoritative rebuke*.

of the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, would consequently be confirmed in heaven,—would be confirmed by our Lord himself. This is, I think, the meaning of our Lord's promise,—“Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Having thus finished our examination of these two important passages (our Lord's declaration to Peter on his confession of faith, and his subsequent promise to all the apostles, of the power to bind and loose), it may be useful to make three observations. First, The promise made to Peter was expressly made on the ground of the faith which he had professed, and which our Lord knew him really to possess, and consequently cannot be claimed by any *as being his successors*, inasmuch as they are not, *as his successors*, necessarily partakers of “like precious faith.” Secondly. There is no reference made in either passage to any successors of the apostles, nor any intimation that the power thereby conferred was to be perpetuated. Thirdly. The promise to the apostles was made to them personally,¹ because it necessarily involved a promise of

¹ I use the word “personally,” to express what was addressed to them *exclusively and without any power of transmission*, whether addressed to them in their individual or in their apostolic character ; and I use it in contradistinction to what was addressed to them in respect to those parts of the apostolic office which belonged to them in common with other faithful ministers of the gospel, whether pastors, elders, or overseer. The author of *Ancient Christianity* (i. 493—497,) has pointed out the importance of this distinction : though he expresses it as being between words “addressed to the apostles *personally*,” and “officially ;” whereas

infallibility in respect of the matters included within the scope of the authority. God will not engage to ratify the doctrines and appointments of men, without securing their infallibility, their entire conformity to his will, in delivering the doctrines and making the appointments. Our Lord, in the early part of his ministry on earth, declared: "Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matt. v. 18.) And he afterwards declared: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. xxiv. 35.) Had men been entrusted with the power of binding and loosing, without being placed under an infallible guide in the exercise of it, they would, in some instances at least, have set aside the commands of the law, and the words of our Lord: yea, fallible men, impiously arrogating to themselves this power, *have* (as far as in them lay) set aside the law of God and the words of Christ, and made them of none effect by their traditions. The apostles, to whom this power of binding and loosing was really committed, were (as we have seen) to be endued with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, who should preserve them from all error in their authoritative teaching, should bring to their remembrance *all* that Jesus had taught them, and should lead them into *all truth* necessary for the

he obviously intends to include under the latter class those words only which have a "personal" as well as an "official" meaning (See *Ib.* p. 494); and consequently not to include words which (though in a sense addressed to them *officially as apostles*,) relate to parts of the apostolic office not intended to be perpetuated in the church.

salvation of souls and the edification of the church. This infallible guide being alike promised to them all, the power was entrusted to them personally and individually : and there is nothing, either in the words conferring the power, or in the context, to intimate that it *could* be transmitted.

Closely connected with this authority, though clearly to be distinguished therefrom, is that which, as recorded by St. John, our Lord conferred on his apostles on the evening of his resurrection. After relating his appearance in the morning to Mary Magdalene, the evangelist proceeds :

“ Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you : as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; *and* whosoever *sins* ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.” (John xx. 19—24.)

In this narrative no notice is taken of any except “ the disciples,” i. e. the apostles ; for St. John never uses the word *apostle*, except in the Apocalypse. He

always in his Gospel speaks of the apostles as "the disciples," or "his" (Jesus') disciples," (John xviii. 1. compared with Luke xxii. 14—19.) or "the twelve"—so he calls them in this very passage, though Judas Iscariot was then dead. We learn, however, from St. Luke, that others were assembled with the apostles when our Lord appeared to them on the evening of his resurrection. The two disciples, who had seen our Lord at Emmaus, had "returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven," (i. e. the surviving apostles generally, Thomas being absent) "gathered together, and them that were with them." And, while they were talking together of our Lord having appeared to Peter, and of his interview with the two disciples going to Emmaus, "Jesus himself stood in the midst." On comparing the narratives of St. John (xx. 19—23.) and St. Luke¹ (xxiv. 33—42.) it is clear that they relate to the same interview, though many different particulars are recorded, some in the one, and some in the other, narrative: and, from an attentive perusal of Luke xxiv., it will appear to be a very probable conjecture, that among those, whom the two disciples found gathered together with the apostles, were the women, or some of the women, who had been at the sepulchre in the morning, especially as with these women the eleven, after our Lord's ascension, "continued with one accord in prayer." (Acts i. 13, 14.)

Yet we cannot conceive, that the whole of what St.

¹ See Appendix II. in which I have arranged the narratives of these two evangelists in parallel columns.

John records our Lord to have said on this occasion was addressed to this assembled company. Would he have said to any but the apostles, “as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you”? It was of the eleven exclusively that our Lord, in his prayer after his last supper, said: “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.”¹ (John xvii. 18.) And if women were present, it would obviously be inconsistent with the principle of the apostle’s directions touching the order of the church, (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. and 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12.) to suppose that *such* a mission was intrusted to them. On the other hand, the first words which our Lord spake on this occasion, and which are recorded by St. Luke (xxiv. 36.) as well as by St. John—“Peace *be* unto you”—appear to have been addressed to the whole assembled company.

I think the case is this. St. John (who in his gospel principally relates those events and those discourses of our Lord which had been omitted by the other evangelists) records, in this passage, a renewed and enlarged commission given to the apostles, Thomas however being absent; and then in a subsequent passage (xx. 26—29.) he relates what occurred eight days afterwards when Thomas was present. These particulars had not been noticed by the other evangelists:² and St. John

¹ That only the apostles were present on that occasion is clear from Matt. xxvi. 20. Mark xiv. 13. Luke xxii. 14.

² St. Mark sums up the interview in one verse (xvi. 14.) and notices only “the eleven,” as present. St. Matthew is silent respecting it.

introduces his account of the commission by mentioning some circumstances which fix the time when it was given, and identify the occasion with the appearance recorded by St. Luke.¹ In mentioning these circumstances, it was not necessary for him to specify, that others were present besides the apostles; or that his first salutation—"Peace *be* unto you"—was addressed, and his hands and side shown, to others besides the apostles. When he proceeds—"Then said Jesus to them again"—he relates what the other evangelists had omitted; and all that follows, was addressed to the apostles exclusively, our Lord distinguishing them as the persons *then* addressed, by breathing on them.

We are now in a situation to examine the import of the words so addressed to the apostles exclusively. Just after his last supper, our Lord had said to the eleven: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." (John xiv. 27.) But, when he was apprehended, they had all forsaken him and fled. (Matt. xxvi. 56)—one of them had thrice denied him. To assure them of forgiveness, our Lord now confirmed to them the legacy of his peace; and he both confirmed and enlarged their apostolic commission. "Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

To enable them to execute this commission, our Lord added: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," of which his breathing on them was emblematical. They had already partaken of the Holy Spirit in his *sanctifying graces*—they were clean, all of them, now that the

¹ See Appendix II.

traitor Judas was gone “to his own place” (John xiii. 10, 11. Matt. xxvii. 5. Acts i. 25): but their sanctification was imperfect—in the hour of trial they had forsaken him and fled,” (Matt. xxvi. 56) and on various occasions they had drawn on themselves his reproofs for contentions about worldly superiority. They had already partaken of the Holy Spirit in his *enlightening influences*. Peter knew by revelation, that Jesus was “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. xvi. 16, 17): and our Lord had “given unto” all the eleven “the words which” his Father had given him, “and they” had “received *them* and” had “known surely that” Jesus “came out from” the Father, and they had “believed that” the Father had “sent” him. (John xvii. 8.) But their illumination was still very imperfect, their knowledge very defective—our Lord had “yet many things to say unto” them, but they “could not bear them” then. (John xvi. 12.) They had been partakers of the Holy Spirit in His *miraculous powers*—our Lord had empowered them to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out devils. (Matt. x. 8. Mark vi. 13). But they had received power to perform miracles of beneficence only—they had not been authorized to inflict any miraculous punishment; neither had they received the gift of tongues, or the gift of prophecy. Our Lord, during his ministry on earth, had promised them, that, when he should leave them, he would send to them the Holy Spirit, “the Spirit of truth,” who should lead them “into all truth.” (John xvi. 13.) He now renewed the promise,

giving them, as an earnest of its complete fulfilment, more light and a higher degree of sanctification—a larger measure of the qualifications requisite for the office conferred upon them, than they as yet possessed. But the full measure of qualification which was to be bestowed upon them, the full accomplishment both of the previous promise and of the words—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—was, I conceive, reserved till after our Lord should have ascended into heaven, and been glorified; reserved to the approaching day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was poured out in fuller measure than ever before¹ both in his gifts and his graces; and they were "filled with the Holy Ghost," (Acts ii. 1—4) and qualified for the office and commission with which he entrusted them when he said—"as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you." These words are also intimately connected with those that immediately follow. "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whosoever *sins* ye retain, they are retained"—words, which require a very careful consideration and cautious examination. They are sometimes confounded with those, in which our Lord had, on a former occasion, given to his apostles power to bind and loose. But there is a marked distinction between the terms in which the two powers are conferred. The power to

¹ "In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was NOT YET *given*, because that Jesus was NOT YET GLORIFIED.)" John vii. 37, 38, 39.

bind and loose related to things—"whatsoever *things*" (ὅσα ἐάν)—to general principles, laws, and rules: the power to remit and retain sins relates to the *sins of individuals*—"whosoever sins ye remit" (ἐν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἀμαρτίας.)—Some further and distinct authority, therefore, must be intended in the passage under consideration—Yet *it cannot be a judicial authority extending to the remission or retention of sins* AS REGARDS THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF THE LAST DAY. Such an interpretation of the words would be directly opposed to other plain passages of Scripture. Even when on earth, our Lord declared that "the Father . . . hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John v. 22) The apostle Paul assured the Athenians "that God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained." (Acts xvii. 31)—even the same day of which he wrote to the Romans; "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." (Rom. ii. 16.) How, indeed, can any one "judge the secrets of men," or "judge the world in righteousness," but God "who trieth the hearts and reins?" Or who can forgive sins but God, of whose law sin is the transgression?

The commission, which our Lord had just given to his apostles, leads us, I think, to the true meaning of the words under consideration. He had sent them, as his Father had sent him—to preach with divine authority the same gospel—to declare the sins of all who should repent and believe in Jesus remitted, and

the sins of all who should not believe in Him retained. He had promised them his Holy Spirit to preserve them from all error in executing this commission : and he now declared, that whosoever should possess the character (the repentance and faith) to which his apostles should promise remission of sins, his sins should be remitted ; and that whosoever should not possess that character, his sins should be retained.

In this sense the passage is *in a measure*¹ applicable to all ministers, *who are sent by our Lord*. They are authorized to preach the same gospel as the apostles preached : and, *so far as they preach that gospel faithfully*, they declare the character of those whose sins are forgiven, and the character of those whose sins are not forgiven. Yet there is this difference between the apostles and all other ministers. The apostles were preserved from all error in preaching the gospel ; but with other ministers it is not so. To their preaching our Lord's declaration applies so far only, as they preach the same doctrine as the apostles preached : and accordingly no mention is made in the passage of other ministers than the apostles.

The passage, I think, may (as regards the *apostles*)

¹ Other promises require certain qualifications. Thus our Lord, preaching on the mountain to the multitude (Matt. v. 1.) said : " Ask, and it shall be given you." (Matt. vii. 7.) And on another occasion he added : " For EVERY ONE that asketh receiveth." (Luke xi. 10.) But St. James writes : " Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* on your lusts." (James iv. 3.) And again, " Let" a man " ask in faith nothing wavering. For he that wavereth . . . let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." (James i. 6, 7.)

have a further meaning. I think our Lord, on this occasion, gave to his apostles *judicial*, as he had by the binding and loosing power given them *legislative*, authority over his church—authority to remit or retain sins, not in reference to the final judgment, but in reference to the church, its ordinances, its communion, its privileges, and its means of grace. He gave them authority to exclude an offender from church-fellowship, and to restore him when penitent. The church was bound, in such matters, to execute the sentence of an apostle, which would always be pronounced under the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit: and, should the church fail in its duty, our Lord himself (the great Head of the church) would make it effectual, by withholding on the one hand from the person whose sins the apostle so retained the blessings usually attendant on the public and outward means of grace, or by supplying on the other hand the want of public ordinances to the person whose sins the apostle had so remitted.

In confirmation of this extended interpretation of the passage, we may observe, that we have an instance of this authority exercised in the Corinthian church by St. Paul, who, though not one of those to whom the words were addressed, was, after our Lord's ascension, invested ¹ by Him with full apostolic power, and asserts most strongly his apostleship in both of his epistles to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. i. 1, ix. 1, 2, and 2 Cor. i. 1, xi. 5, xii. 12.) The Corinthians had al-

¹ See post Ch. III.

lowed an incestuous member to continue in their church; and the apostle, after reproving them for this neglect, (1 Cor. v. 12.) gave them these directions: "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power¹ of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened . . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (1 Cor. v. 3--13.) The latter clause—"put away from among yourselves that wicked person,"—explains what St. Paul meant by *delivering him to Satan*.² They were to excommunicate him, to exclude him from their church and society, to put him out of the "visible church," "the kingdom of God," and thereby expel him into the world, the kingdom of Satan. This they were to do in a solemn manner, when "gathered together," and when by

¹ "Power," *δυνάμει*.

² From the similarity of the expression I infer, that the same apostle alluded to a similar proceeding, when, speaking of some who "concerning faith" had "made shipwreck," he adds: "of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." (1 Tim. i. 19, 20.) He had excommunicated them, to convince them of their error, and lead them to repentance.

prayer they were united in spirit with the apostle, who by virtue of his apostolic authority, and “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” had already *judged* concerning the offender, and now enjoined the proceeding. The sentence was not a sentence of final condemnation. The object of the proceeding was—not that the offender should remain under the power of Satan—but, on the contrary, that his “flesh” (his corrupt nature) should be destroyed, that he should be brought to repentance, and “saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

He did repent; and, in a subsequent epistle, the apostle wrote concerning him to the church of Corinth: “Sufficient to such a man *is* this punishment, which *was inflicted* of many. So that contrariwise ye *ought* rather to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love towards him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the person of Christ.”¹ (2 Cor. ii. 6—10.) Here the apostle directs the Corinthians to “forgive” the penitent offender, and to “confirm” their “love towards him:” while he himself forgave his offence “in the person of Christ.” They were to re-admit

¹ So the authorized version: but in the margin, “In the sight of Christ.”

him into their church and Christian fellowship and love ; the apostle forgiving him also, and revoking, in the name of Christ and by his apostolic authority, the sentence of excommunication, which in the name of Christ he had pronounced.

We have, in this instance, a case in which St. Paul, by virtue of his apostolic authority, first *retained*, and then *remitted*, the sin,¹—that is to say—first pronounced, and then revoked, the ecclesiastical punishment. The judgment, in both cases, was his ; the church, at his command, inflicted and removed it. The offender's sin, when the apostle retained it, was retained ; when he remitted it, the sin was remitted.

The power of retaining and remitting sin *in this sense* is obviously a power essential to the well-being of every visible church in all ages : the necessity for it is expressed by the apostle when he says—"Purge out therefore the old leaven," exclude from your society "that wicked person," lest, as "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," he should corrupt your whole church : and, though our Lord gave no direction for this power being perpetuated, the apostles, as invested with legislative authority in the church, were authorized to provide for its exercise as long as the church should last. From the reproof which the apostle Paul gave to the Corinthian church for not having excommuni-

¹ The apostle seems *not* to have exercised this authority *on every occasion*, even against heretical teachers. Though he tells the Galatians : "I would they were even cut off" from the church, "which trouble you," (Gal. v. 12.) ; he did not (as far as appears) actually cut them off.

cated the offending member, as well as from the reproofs which our Lord himself by his apostle John gave to the angels of the churches at Pergamos and Thyatira for similar neglect (Rev. ii. 12—22.), we may conclude, that each church was invested with this authority over its members. But, in the exercise of this authority, the church, its ministers, may err: in which case the sentence, though on earth carried into execution by exclusion from ordinances, will not be ratified in heaven. A sentence of exclusion, if just, may bring the offender to repentance, or (if he continue impenitent) may aggravate his final condemnation: but, if erroneous, it will not be sanctioned by the great Head of the Church, who can by his Holy Spirit supply the want of ordinances and means of grace to an individual unjustly excommunicated—as, on the other hand, he will not forgive the impenitent sinner, though restored to the outward communion of the church by which he had been justly excommunicated.

Possibly the promise may have some reference to the miraculous powers conferred on the Apostles: and such a notion is naturally suggested by the language which our Lord addressed to the sick of the palsy on the occasion of his cure—"Thy sins be forgiven thee." (Matt. ix. 2.) But the apostles, though they wrought many miracles of mercy, are in no one instance recorded to have used such language. Three, and only three, miraculous punishments are recorded, with the infliction of which an apostle was in any way con-

nected. I refer to the cases of Ananias, Sapphira, and Elymas the sorcerer. On Ananias, the apostle Peter pronounced no sentence, but merely charged him with his sin. (Acts v. 3, 4.) In the case of Sapphira, his language is rather that of a prophet foretelling the punishment, than of a judge pronouncing sentence. (Acts v. 9.) The same may be said of the apostle Paul's address to Elymas. (Acts xiii. 9—11.) There are, indeed, passages both in the same apostle's epistles to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. iv. 18—21. and 2 Cor. xiii. 2, 3.) and in the apostle John's third epistle, (3 John 9, 10.) which sound very much like threats, that, if he came where the offenders were, he might be led to inflict some miraculous punishment on them. But I should hesitate to draw the conclusion, that the words—"WHOSOEVER sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them : *and* WHOSOEVER *sins* ye retain, they are retained"—include a reference to miraculous powers. If such a reference be included, it cannot be the principal or primary meaning of the words ; and the promise in this sense does not belong to ministers in the present day, miraculous gifts having long since ceased in the church.

Our Lord's address to Peter, when thrice he inquired whether the apostle loved him—"Feed my lambs." "Feed my sheep." (John xxi. 15—17.)—does not appear to have any particular bearing on the present inquiry. It gave him no authority distinct from that given to the other apostles ; and on that occasion these words were obviously addressed to him in par-

ticular, in order to confirm him in his apostleship notwithstanding his fall, and to assure him of forgiveness. He was to feed the flock of Christ : so were the other apostles : and so were all who were afterwards appointed elders. St. Paul exhorted the elders of the church of Ephesus, and Peter exhorted the elders among those to whom he addressed his first epistle, to “feed the Church of God.” (Acts xx. 17, 28. and 1 Pet. v. 1, 2.) The command, therefore, does not import any commission given exclusively to Peter. The argument,¹ that supremacy was given to Peter by the direction to feed the sheep (the clergy !) as well as the lambs (the laity !), is too absurd to require an answer : the argument,² which from the commission to feed the flock as including authority to destroy wolves, concludes that heretics, even though princes, are to be put to death, is not only absurd, but wicked.

Our Lord’s last³ commission to his apostles is thus recorded by St. Matthew. “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach⁴ [“make disciples of” *margin*] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ;⁵

¹ Bellarmine quoted by Doddridge on the passage.

² See Boyle’s Philos. Comment. quoted Ib.

³ See Appendix III.

⁴ μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη—“make all nations disciples.”—The word here translated “teach,” is a different word from that immediately afterwards translated “teaching.”

⁵ ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν—“I have charged you with”—referring, appar-

and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 18—20.)

Here we find the apostolic commission, which had hitherto been restricted to Judæa, and the lost sheep of the house of Israel, now extended¹ to all nations. It was also extended in respect of its object. They were not only to preach the gospel, to teach others what Jesus had taught them; they were to *make disciples* of all nations, *baptizing* them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." They were to plant Christian churches throughout the world; and, by baptism, disciples were to be received

rently to his having not only taught them, but commissioned them to preach the gospel—given them the gospel in charge. It is the word translated "he shall give . . . charge" in Matt. iv. 6.

¹ An intimation of this extension, and new directions adapted to this extended mission, had been given by our Lord to his apostles on the night before his crucifixion. "He said unto them"—obviously referring to their former mission—"When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and but one." (Luke xxii. 35, 36.) You can no longer expect the same hospitality as heretofore: you must, therefore, make the provision which travellers usually make for a journey—a purse, a scrip, and a sword. Not that our Lord intended to be literally understood as to each article which he mentioned; but only to revoke his former directions, and substitute such as were proper for missionaries of the gospel travelling in foreign heathen lands. Accordingly, when the disciples produced two swords probably imagining that now he would assert his right to a temporal kingdom, "he said unto them, It is enough" (Luke xxii. 38.)—which it obviously was not for eleven persons, if they were to comply *literally* with his directions. And, when Peter drew his sword and smote off Malchus's ear, our Lord reprov'd him—"Put up thy sword again into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. xxvi. 51, 52.)

as such, and admitted into the visible church—a vast undertaking, but, for the accomplishment of which, and their encouragement in the prosecution thereof, a promise was added, that Jesus would be with them “always *even* unto the end of the world.”

This is a promise extending beyond the lives of the apostles, belonging therefore to others besides them—a promise of Christ’s perpetual presence—a promise to his *church*, that he will ever be with it, hearing its petitions, guiding, protecting, enlightening, comforting, strengthening, and sanctifying it;¹ so that (as he had already promised)² the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. The promise is general. I see nothing to restrict it to any line of succession derived from the apostles. It belongs to all, who are called by the Holy Ghost to preach the same gospel which the apostles preached, and to administer the same baptism which they administered—and, in a sense, it belongs to all true members of Christ’s spiritual church, to all who receive in faith his gospel, and are baptized with the baptism which he appointed. It may, however, be inferred from this, and from other passages which have been previously considered, that the apostles, on whom full power had been conferred for regulating all the economy of the Christian church, were authorized to give directions touching the appointment of ministers,

¹ This was the substance of, or included in, our Lord’s prayer for all who should “believe on” him through the apostles’ word. (John xvii.) And assuredly his prayer is, has been, and will be granted, until the end of the world.

² Matt. xvi. 18.

who should make disciples, baptize, and teach : but the passage itself determines nothing as the nature of such directions, or the mode of such appointment; nor does it prescribe any particular form of church government.

St. Luke adds another part of the apostolic commission, which our Lord (apparently ¹ at this interview) gave, though not for the first time,² to the eleven. "Ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke xxiv. 48). "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i. 8.) They were thus to be witnesses to Jesus, because they had been with him from the beginning—they had been ordained, "that they should be with him." (Mark iii. 14.) Our Lord, conversing with them after his last supper, had already said : "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me : and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." (John xv. 26, 27.) It was, therefore, an essential part of the apostolic office *to bear witness to Christ* ; to testify what they had seen and heard, while they were with him from the beginning. This part of the apostolic office was obviously personal, and not transmissible to others.

St. Mark records some further particulars apparently³

¹ See Appendix III.

² See John xv. 27.

³ See Appendix III.

of this interview—"And he" (Jesus) "said unto them" (*the eleven* is the immediate antecedent)—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark xvi. 15—18). The commission as here recorded is: "preach"—*κηρύξατε*—proclaim as heralds—"the gospel to every creature:" and it is sanctioned by a declaration of the different consequences, which should result from this preaching to those who should believe and be baptized on the one hand, and to those who should not believe on the other. A promise is added of supernatural powers, including some powers not before specifically noticed as conferred, either on the apostles or on the seventy disciples, the most remarkable of which is the gift of tongues, which was not needed while the preaching of the gospel was restricted to Judea and the children of Israel, but would now be essential for the promulgation of the gospel throughout the world. This promise was not made to the apostles exclusively—"These signs," said our Lord, "shall FOLLOW THEM THAT BELIEVE."¹ Was

¹ Our Lord had already, during his ministry on earth, declared: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John xiv. 12.)—a promise of that fuller effusion of the Holy Ghost, which Jesus,

this a promise, that *every* believer should be endued with these powers? A question put by St. Paul to the Corinthians, and implying a strong negation, will settle this point—"Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret." (1 Cor. xii. 29, 30.) The power of working miracles was not, any more than the apostleship, conferred on all; and even the gift of healing, and the gift of tongues do not appear to have been always united in the same individual. The promise, therefore, was a promise of supernatural powers, to be *so* conferred, and on *such* believers, as should be sufficient to avouch by such *signs* the divine origin of the doctrine in which they believed. There is no limit expressed for the continuance of these signs; neither does the language¹ used necessarily import that they should for ever accompany the Church: while the circumstance of their being expressly given as *signs* may in some measure indicate, that the signs, when no longer need-

after he had ascended to his Father, poured out on the day of Pentecost, and occasionally afterwards—a promise, to which the same observations respecting its extent will apply as to the promise noticed in the text.

¹ St. Mark does not mention our Lord's promise recorded by St. Matthew—"I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20.)—and if (as I think we should) we consider the narratives of St. Matthew (xxviii. 18—20.) and St. Mark (xvi. 15—19.) as relating to the same interview, and adopt Dr. Doddridge's harmony of the two passages (See Appendix III.), that promise of our Lord's perpetual presence will be connected with the commission recorded by St. Matthew, but not necessarily with the promise of supernatural powers now under consideration and exclusively mentioned by St. Mark.

ed for the confirmation of the gospel, would cease. We shall have occasion hereafter to revert to this question of the continuance of supernatural powers in the church.

Thus far our Lord committed to his apostles an almost unlimited discretion as to the government of his church, an authority subject to *scarcely* any restriction; but in the exercise of which, the guidance of the Holy Spirit was promised to them. In one particular, indeed, he gave them (as we have seen) a specific direction to baptize “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”—and he had previously instituted the Lord’s Supper.—These two ordinances, instituted by our Lord himself, I have reserved for a separate consideration, as being ordinances which the apostles themselves had no authority to alter.

We have no distinct mention made of the first institution of Christian baptism: but, immediately after our Lord’s interview with Nicodemus, we find it recorded, that “after these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there tarried with them, and baptized.” (John iii. 22.)

And not long afterwards we find in the same evangelist: “When therefore Jesus knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea.” (John iv. 1, 2.)

From these passages we learn two things: first, that Jesus, in the early part of his ministry, instituted

baptism, as the rite by which his disciples were to be distinguished: and secondly, that the rite was generally (if not always) administered by “his disciples,” not by Jesus himself.

In what form Christian baptism was administered during our Lord’s ministry on earth is not mentioned: nor is it for our present purpose important to enquire, whether it was, during that period, administered in the form afterwards prescribed, viz. in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.¹ It is sufficient, that our Lord, immediately before his ascension, commanded his apostles: “Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world.” (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) This

¹ Scott, in his note on John iii. 22—24, thinks it “not probable” that our Lord and his disciples “baptized in that form which he afterwards prescribed:” but he assigns no reason for this opinion; and I see not how to reconcile it with the account given of St. Paul’s conversation with the twelve disciples at Ephesus (Acts xix. 1—5.) The men were “disciples,” professing Christians: and, when they declared—“we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost”—the apostle inquired, “Unto what then were ye baptized?”—a question obviously implying, that, if they had received Christian baptism, they must have heard of the Holy Ghost—“and they said, Unto John’s baptism.” This is all very intelligible, if we assume that Christian baptism was from the first administered “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” But it is not easy to account for the apostle’s question, if that form was not used till after the time when our Lord is recorded by St. Matthew to have prescribed it.

command is sufficient both for the minister, and for the disciple.

From that time, if not previously, this was the prescribed *form* of Christian baptism—a form which our Lord gave his apostles no authority to alter; and which (it cannot reasonably be doubted) they invariably followed, though disciples are sometimes said to have been “baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Acts xix. 5.)¹

Nothing, however, was prescribed by our Lord as to the *persons by whom* the rite was to be administered: for the apostles could not personally baptize “all nations;” still less could they, except by the ministry of others, perpetuate the rite “unto the end of the world.” The language, however, imports, that they were to provide for the continued administration of baptism, as well as for the preaching of the word, “until the end of the world:” and to make such provision would also fall within the general authority already committed to them, by which they were empowered to legislate for the church. It will be a subject of inquiry hereafter, what provision the apostles *did* make for these purposes.

¹ In this particular instance, it is clear from the context, (and we may consequently in other instances infer) that the parties were baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” for it is evident from the preceding narrative, that the apostle Paul took it for granted that those, who had received Christian baptism, had been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and must therefore have heard of the Holy Ghost. To be “baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus,” was a concise mode of expressing Christian baptism, the form of which was then well understood.

Nor does the command distinctly prescribe *the persons to whom* the rite was to be administered. The apostles are commanded to “make all nations disciples, baptizing them;” baptism being thus intimately connected with the making of disciples: and we find the same connection mentioned, when it is recorded, “that Jesus made ¹ and baptized more disciples than John.” (John iv. 1.) The apostles were to baptize “all nations,” without any *specified* distinction of age or sex; nor is any previous qualification or condition *here* required, except what is implied in the connection between being baptized and being made a disciple. When then may a person be said to be made a disciple? Is it when placed under instruction? or is it when so far instructed, as to profess belief in the doctrine? When the Samaritans “believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women” (Acts viii. 12.): and when the eunuch of Ethiopia inquired,—“What doth hinder me to be baptized?”—“Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God:” and upon this confession of faith Philip “baptized him.” (Acts viii. 36—38.) Such a confession of faith, therefore, ought

¹ The word rendered “teach” in (Matt. xxviii. 19.) is μαθητεύσατε (a different word from that translated “teaching” in v. 20.) and is obviously used to express what is meant, when the apostle John says that “Jesus made disciples,” (μαθητὰς ποιεῖ.) (John iv. 1.)—the connection with baptism being the same in both cases.

to be required of adults coming to baptism; and it would be unreasonable to baptize them in a name in which they did not believe, or even profess to believe; nor without such belief could they be considered as *willing* to receive Christian instruction. But the case of infants is different. The faith, professed by those who bring them to baptism, is a sufficient warrant for anticipating, that they will be placed under Christian instruction when capable thereof; and, by being so brought by believers, they may be considered as disciples within the meaning of our Lord's command: while adults, who do not even profess to believe in Christ as the Son of God, cannot be so considered. That infants are admissible to baptism, may also be inferred from our Lord's declaration and conduct on the following occasion. They "brought unto him little children,¹ that he should put *his* hands on them and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven:"² (Matt. xix. 13, 14.) "And he took them up in his

¹ *παιδία*—a diminutive—St. Luke in the corresponding passage uses first *ἐσέφη* (xviii. 15.) and then *παιδία* (Ib. 16.) The former word is properly rendered (in our authorized version) "infants," and is used by the same evangelist for a "babe" in the womb, (Luke i. 41, 44,) and for a "new-born babe" (Luke ii. 12, 16. Acts vii. 19); in which latter sense it is also used by St. Peter. (1 Pet. ii. 2.)

² If it be thought, that the "kingdom of heaven" in this place means heaven itself; the argument will still hold, that those, who are admissible into heaven, are admissible into the visible church on earth, and consequently to baptism; especially as our Lord "blessed them"—either pronounced or asked a blessing, a *spiritual* blessing upon them.

arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.” (ἡ ἐλλόγει αὐτά) (Mark x. 16.) On this occasion our Lord plainly declared, that such little children or infants were admissible into the kingdom of heaven—into his visible church on earth—and consequently were proper subjects for baptism, just as the children of Israelites were not only permitted, but commanded, to be circumcised on the eighth day after their birth ; and so were received into the congregation of Israel, then the visible church of God on earth.

In thus considering baptism as a divinely-appointed rite for admitting disciples into the visible church of Christ, I express no opinion on the many theological questions connected with the rite ; nor would I be understood as considering it to be *merely* a rite. The various controversies as to its nature and efficacy as a sacrament do not appear to me to bear on the subject of the present inquiry—the constitution of the Church. In the same sense, the Lord’s supper, which I now proceed to consider, may be viewed as an ordinance of divine appointment, by partaking of which the disciple professes his adherence to the faith into which he was baptized, and a grateful remembrance of the death of Christ ; while the church which administers the ordinance, recognizes him as being still one of its members.

The institution of the Lord’s supper is not noticed by St. John, who principally records what the other evangelists had omitted. By each of the three other evangelists it is related ; but St. Luke alone of the

evangelists mentions the command to continue its celebration. His account is as follows :

“ And he ” (Jesus) “ took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them ” (the apostles) “ saying, This is my body which is given for you : this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” (Luke xxii. 19, 20.)

The fullest and most minute account of the institution is that given by St. Paul, who was not present on the occasion, but had the particulars from immediate revelation.

“ I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed, took bread ; and when he had given thanks he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat : this is my body, which is broken for you : this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood : this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. xi. 23—26.)

It is implied in this narrative, and it is expressly mentioned by St. Matthew, that our Lord gave the cup to the apostles, and commanded them to drink of it. “ Drink ye all of it : for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28.) St. Mark says : “ he gave *it* to them : and they all drank of it.” (Mark xiv. 23.)

There is one, and only one other particular to be noticed—a particular recorded both by St. Matthew and by St. Mark, viz. that our Lord *blessed* the bread. The expression used both by St. Luke and St. Paul is *εὐχαρισήσας ἔκλασε*, having given thanks, he brake it. The words of both St. Matthew and St. Mark are: *λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν¹ ἄρτον καὶ εὐλογήσας² ἔκλασε* (Matt. xxvi. 26. Mark xiv. 22.) “Jesus having taken bread and blessed *it*, brake *it*.” Jesus, not only gave thanks to God, but *blessed* the bread and the wine. What is the meaning of the word *blessed* in the passage? The use of the same word in the miracle of the loaves and fishes will furnish an answer to the question. “Then he” (Jesus) “took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake.”³ (Luke ix. 16.) He pronounced, or rather (as the looking up to heaven seems to import) he besought a blessing on the loaves and fishes—he besought that, although naturally capable of satisfying

¹ The article is not in St. Mark; nor (according to some readings) in St. Matthew; but the variance does not affect the sense, further than that the one may mean “bread,” the other “a loaf.”

² The proper idiom of the Greek applies the *εὐλογήσας*, as well as the *λαβὼν*, to the *ἄρτον*, especially as either *ἄρτον*, or the relative pronoun must be understood after *ἔκλασε*. Our translators have, therefore, properly supplied *it* after the word, and rendered *εὐλογήσας* having “blessed.” This translation is confirmed by St. Paul’s question—“The cup of blessing (*εὐλογίας*) which we bless (*εὐλογούμεν*), is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” (1 Cor. x. 16.)

³ *Λαβὼν δὲ τὰς πέντε ἄρτους, καὶ τὰς δύο ἰχθύας, ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν ἑρᾶν, εὐλόγησεν αὐτὰς, καὶ κατέκλησε.* The pronoun *αὐτοὺς* “them”

only a very few individuals, they might miraculously feed the assembled thousands. So, when he blessed the bread and wine, he pronounced, or rather (as the circumstance of his at the same time *giving thanks* implies) he besought a blessing on them—he besought that, in eating and drinking thereof, the apostles might spiritually eat his flesh of which the bread was an emblem, and spiritually drink his blood of which the wine was a symbol; and that they might be nourished thereby unto life everlasting.

Our Lord, then, himself on this occasion *administered* the supper. He *blessed* the bread and the wine. The apostles only *partook* of it; eat of the bread, and drank of the wine: and it was after our Lord had given them the bread to eat, that he said, “This do in remembrance of me,” and again after he had given them the cup to drink of the wine, that he said—“This do ye, AS OFT AS YE DRINK IT, in remembrance of me.” This command, therefore, was a command to *partake* of the Lord’s supper in remembrance of Him; and, though addressed personally to the apostles, it was through them addressed to all disciples—for the apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthian disciples, im-

determines the application of the word *εὐλόγησεν* “blessed.” It is omitted, and must be understood, in the parallel passages in St. Matthew (xiv. 19.) and St. Mark (vi. 41.)

¹ St. Luke and St. Paul use the word *εὐχαρισήσας* in connection with the breaking of the bread, and imply the like as to the wine by the words *ὡσάντως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον*: St. Matthew and St. Mark use it in connection with giving the cup. (Luke xxii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. Matt. xxvi. 27. Mark xiv. 23.)

mediately adds : “as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.”* (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

In no one of the accounts given in Scripture of the institution of our Lord’s supper is any direction recorded as to the individuals *by whom it was to be administered*. But it was clearly implied that provision was to be made for the due administration of the ordinance until our Lord’s second advent ; for those who partake of it thereby “shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. xi. 26.) ; and the power previously committed to the apostles of binding and loosing would authorize them to lay down all such regulations *not inconsistent with our Lord’s own institution*, as might be necessary, whether with regard to the persons who were to administer the Lord’s supper, the persons to be admitted thereto, or the mode, or place, or time of administration. *Regulations not inconsistent with our Lord’s own institution*. The apostles themselves had no authority to give the bread and withhold the cup, in direct contravention of our Lord’s express command, “Drink ye ALL of this.” Nor *did* they withhold either the bread or the cup. It is obvious, from the passage in the epistle to the Corinthians already quoted, that

* This coming is obviously a *personal* advent. The remembrance of our Lord’s death was to be continued till such remembrance should be no longer needful, when he should “come again and receive” his disciples “unto himself”—an *advent yet future* : and, accordingly, the disciples continued to celebrate the Lord’s Supper under apostolic sanction after his ascension, though he had appeared to many disciples in the interval, between his resurrection and ascension.

the Corinthian disciples partook of both. Those who only eat the bread, without drinking of the cup, do *not* “shew the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

In the institution of the Lord’s supper I cannot discover the remotest idea of *offering a sacrifice*. It is not a sacrifice, but a thankful memorial of the Great Sacrifice which Jesus offered once for all on the cross for the sins of the world. It is not the officiating minister who *alone* shews the Lord’s death : both he and the disciples, *as often* as they *eat* that bread, *and drink* that cup—as often as they do *both* “in remembrance” of Christ—“do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. xi. 26.) That the Lord’s supper is not a sacrifice is further manifest from the apostolic epistles, especially from that to the Hebrews. But this question, whether the Lord’s supper be a sacrifice, will be more fully considered hereafter, when the different orders of ministers in the Christian church and their different offices are examined : the question has no *direct* bearing on the present inquiry.

The two ordinances, which we have thus considered, baptism and the Lord’s supper, are essential to the Christian Church, as a visible body—the one as the admission of a member, the other as the continuance of membership. The passages cited show, that the Lord’s supper is a representation of spiritual blessings ; nor can it be doubted, that those, who rightly partake of it, partake of the spiritual blessings so represented. The same might be shown of baptism ; but these are

theological questions not falling within the range of the present inquiry.

Such were the measures adopted by our Lord before his ascension, such the provision made by him for the government, extension, and edification of his church. It may be useful here to review them.

Our Lord chose first twelve apostles, and then seventy other disciples : and, at separate times, sent out first the apostles, and afterwards the other seventy, two by two on a missionary journey to preach the gospel in Judea, investing them with supernatural powers. On the return of the seventy to our Lord, he confirmed, and (it seems) enlarged, their power of working miracles : but they are not afterwards noticed distinctly from the other disciples. After his resurrection he promised that supernatural gifts (including the gift of tongues, which had not yet been conferred on any) should follow the church : so that these powers were not confined to the apostles ; while, on the other hand, they do not appear to have been promised in perpetuity. The commission given to the apostles was from the first more extensive than that of the seventy : and it was from time to time enlarged. They were chosen to be the stated followers of our Lord ; and, as such, to be witnesses of all that he did and said on earth—witnesses of the doctrine which he taught, of the miracles by which he vouched his divine mission, of his resurrection, and ascension. They were to preach the gospel and expound *authoritatively* the terms of salvation ; to establish Christian churches throughout the

world ; to receive disciples into the church, baptizing them in a prescribed form ; to provide for the administration of the Lord's supper after the manner appointed by him, as a memorial of his death and sufferings, and at once a symbol and a means of grace to believers. Subject to our Lord's express directions respecting these two ordinances, and to the general principles which our Lord incidentally, from time to time, laid down ; they were invested with full *legislative* authority in the church of Christ ; authority to declare what parts of the *Mosaic* law¹ had ceased to be binding ; authority to establish laws and regulations for the government of the Church. They were also invested with *judicial* authority ; authority to exclude from and receive back into the church ; and, it seems, further (on special occasions, indicated to them by immediate inspiration) to denounce miraculous punishment. In the exercise of these extensive powers, in the *authoritative* preaching of the word and expounding of the terms of salvation, in the execution by them *as apostles* of these legislative and judicial functions, they were to be preserved from all error : and for this purpose the gift of the Holy Ghost was promised to them, to lead them

¹ It is clear from our Lord's declaration, (Matt. v. 18.) that he gave no authority to the apostles to alter one tittle of the *moral* law.—By the *Mosaic* law, in this place, I mean that law which was *peculiar* to the Mosaic economy, the ritual law which was fulfilled and abolished in Christ, and the judicial law which was exclusively given to the Israelites. It was especially over the *ritual* law that authority was given to the apostles to declare, that it had ceased, the substance being come, and new rites substituted.

into all truth. There is, however, no promise, that either this infallibility, or these powers¹ to the due exercise of which the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit was obviously necessary, were to be perpetuated in the church: while the preaching of the word, and the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper would always be requisite; and in respect of these our Lord promised to be with his church "always, even to the end of the world;" not indeed enduing the minister with full apostolic authority, but by the Holy Spirit giving to the word when faithfully preached, and to the sacraments when rightly received, power and efficacy as means and instruments of grace.

The apostles, even during their own lives, could not personally teach all nations; they could not personally admit all converts to baptism; they could not personally in all the congregations administer the Lord's supper: and it was necessary, in the execution of the commission entrusted to them, that they should make provision, not only for the performance of these duties during their lives, but for perpetuating until the end of the world the preaching of the gospel and the administration of its appointed ordinances. It, therefore, fell within the scope of their commission, both to appoint ministers, who should preach the word, baptize, and administer the Lord's supper: and also to make such

¹ The visible church, as has been observed, necessarily has authority to exclude and readmit its members: but this does not necessarily and in every case involve exclusion from or readmission into the spiritual church.

regulations, and give to the church such a constitution, as might best secure a supply of fit and able ministers for these purposes. But it does not follow as a necessary consequence, that they should make such regulations for the appointment of ministers as would exclude from the exercise of these functions all who should not derive, by external designation, a commission from themselves or from individuals whom they should authorize to transmit it.

Before, however, we examine what measures the apostles adopted in execution of the commission entrusted to them, we must consider the appointment first of Matthias, and then of Saul, to the apostolic office : for in these proceedings for settling the churches Saul, who was also Paul, had a large share. We must further inquire in what sense Barnabas is called an apostle ; and we shall also find it useful to consider the supernatural gifts bestowed on the church.

CHAPTER III.

APOSTLES APPOINTED AFTER OUR LORD'S ASCENSION.

OUR Lord, as we have seen, appointed twelve apostles ; and we have not, either in the original appointment, or in the commissions which from time to time he gave to them, discovered any indication that the office was to be perpetual, or was to be conferred on any other individual. In point of fact, however, we find in Scripture that it was after his ascension conferred on others ; and the appointment of these individuals to the office must now be considered. The death of the traitor Judas gave occasion to the first of these appointments.

In the interval between our Lord's ascension and the day of Pentecost, the eleven surviving apostles "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication : with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples " and addressed them (" the number of the names together were about an hundred

and twenty") (Acts i. 13—15.) He reminded them of the prophecy concerning Judas in the psalms, referring apparently ¹ to Psalm xli. 9, and expressly quoting (though not exactly according to the Hebrew) Psalm lxix. 25 ² and Psalm cix. 8. The latter alone bears on our present subject—"His bishopric" (ἐπισκοπήν,³ oversight, overseership, or office of overseer) "let another take. Wherefore" (continued the apostle) "of these men which have companied with us ⁴ all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be ⁵ a WITNESS with us OF HIS RESURRECTION." (Acts i. 20—22.) In pursuance of this advice, "they appointed ⁶ two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was sur-

¹ "Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up *his* heel against me."—This *appears* to be the passage to which the apostle referred, when he said of Judas: "he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." (17.)—Our Lord had already applied it to Judas. (John xiii. 18.)

² This (according to the authorized version) is: "Let their habitation be desolate; *and* let none dwell in their tents." It is observed by Bishop Horne commenting on this verse, that Peter applies it to Judas as the representative of the Jewish nation, noticing that he "was guide to them that took Jesus" (Acts i. 16.): and that our Lord seems to have had it in view, when he said to the Jews; "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. xxiii. 38.)

³ The same Greek word is used by the apostle, as in the Septuagint.

⁴ "Of **THESE** men which have companied with us"—rather "Of **THE** men who have companied with us." τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν.

⁵ "Be ordained to be."—The Greek word so rendered in the authorized version is simply γενέσθαι—"to be," "to become."—I should translate the passage—"Must one become."

⁶ "Appointed,"—ἐσησαν. The word is used in a similar sense, in Acts xvii. 31. ἐσησεν ἡμέραν.—"He hath appointed a day."

named Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all *men*, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots: and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (Acts i. 23—26.)

Several observations arise on this passage—the apostolic office as distinguished from every other office in the church—the mode in which Matthias was appointed to the office—his being “numbered with the eleven”—the filling up thereby of the original number of twelve.

1. The apostleship, to which Matthias was appointed, included two things, the *oversight* of the church, and being a *witness of the resurrection*. Others (as we shall see) are called *overseers* (ἐπίσκοποι), but not in the same sense as the apostles. The apostles were overseers of the whole church of Christ, others of particular or local churches. To others also besides the apostles our Lord had appeared after his resurrection—to the women who went to the tomb with spices to anoint him—to the two disciples whom he met on their journey to Emmaus (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10. Mark xvi. 9—13. Luke xxiv. 13—31.)—to the five hundred brethren of whom he was seen at once (1 Cor. xv. 6.): but the apostles were to be witnesses of his resurrection in a sense peculiar to themselves—they were to *bear* witness of it publicly and proclaim

it throughout the world; and Matthias was, *in this sense*, appointed to be a witness *with them* of our Lord's resurrection.

2. The appointment of Matthias was (as that of the eleven had been) not of men, or by men, but of the Lord. The word translated "appointed,"¹ does not import *election* in the common acceptation of that word: nor is there any reason to doubt, that Barsabas and Matthias were *appointed, set up*, with the unanimous concurrence of the whole assembled body, being persons who had companied with the apostles during the whole of our Lord's ministry upon earth. *Perhaps*, they were the *only* individuals, besides the eleven, found among the company assembled, who "were qualified to stand in the room of Judas, by the fact of their having consorted with Jesus from the commencement of his personal ministry, until the close of it."¹—Whether this were the case or not, the choice between the two was clearly referred to the Lord.

3. When the lot had fallen on Matthias, "he was numbered with the eleven apostles;" but no intimation is given of any other outward designation of him to the apostleship. Nothing is recorded of imposition

¹ To express *election*, χειροτονεῖν, ἐκλεγέσθαι or some similar word would probably have been used. (See Acts vi. 5.)

² This is the view taken of the passage by the author of *Spiritual Despotism* (p. 440.): and I think there is much to support it. St. Peter tells the disciples, that of the men who have "companied with us . . . must one become a witness with us of His resurrection:" no suggestion of election. Two, we are told, were *set up*; again nothing distinct about election. Nor is it unlikely, that two only were found possessing in their full extent the qualifications specified by St. Peter.

of hands either in his case, or in our Lord's appointment of the twelve.

4. When he was thus numbered with the eleven, it was, "that he" might "take part of" that ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression had fallen. The original number of twelve was filled up. Was then this number to be always filled up from time to time? Was no addition to be made to it? I am not aware of any passage in Scripture from which (unless from this passage) it can be inferred, either that by fresh appointments from time to time the number of apostles was to be kept up to twelve, or that it was never to exceed that number. No such inference arises necessarily from this passage; and the intention *seems* to have been, that, in the first instance only, and especially with reference to the first preaching of the resurrection and ascension to the children of Israel, the number of the apostles should be completed to the original number—that of the twelve tribes. The apostolic office, so far as it required the qualifications specified by St. Peter on this occasion, could not be continued beyond the then existing generation: and the subsequent appointment of Saul of Tarsus to that office, which is next to be considered, shews that the number was not to be restricted to twelve.

Saul of Tarsus was appointed an apostle, while the other twelve still held the office. We must now carefully examine his conversion, his appointment to the apostleship, and other parts of his history connected

with it : and we shall find, that like the other apostles he was appointed not of men, but of God ; that, although he never associated with our Lord during his personal ministry, yet (having both seen our Lord and heard his voice after his ascension) Saul was thereby qualified to bear witness (as the other apostles bore witness) that Jesus had risen from the dead. We shall also find, that Saul was invested with authority equal to and co-ordinate with that of the other apostles, and was (like them) replenished with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit required for the due exercise of that authority and the right execution of the commission entrusted to him.

His conversion and call to the apostleship are related by St. Luke in Acts ix. : and the same inspired historian has recorded (Acts xxii. and xxvi.) two speeches of the apostle, in which the same events are narrated. The apostle himself also refers to them in his epistle to the Galatians.

Saul had set off from Jerusalem for Damascus with authority from the chief priests to bring the disciples, who were there, bound to Jerusalem to be punished. As he came nigh to Damascus (Acts xxvi. 12, xxii. 5, 6.), “at mid-day” he “saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about” him. He fell to the earth : and, while he lay on the ground, Jesus himself gave him his commission.—“Rise, and stand upon thy feet : for I have appeared unto thee for this very purpose, to make thee a MINISTER and a WITNESS both of these things

which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee ; delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I SEND ¹ thee, to open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts xxvi. 13—18.)

It is not stated in the narrative of this vision that Saul *saw* our Lord, though our Lord said " I have APPEARED unto thee . . . to make thee . . . a witness . . . of THESE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN." But Ananias, when sent to him to restore his sight of which he had been deprived on this occasion, said unto him : " Jesus, that APPEARED unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me : " (Acts ix. 17.) the God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and SEE that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." (Acts xxii. 14, 15.) The natural construction of these expressions is, that, on that occasion, Saul not only heard the voice of the Lord Jesus, but actually *saw him*. And from passages in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians it is clear, that either on that or on some subsequent occasion, ² he saw the Lord, and was

¹ Send, ἀποσέλλω, the word whence *apostle* is derived.

² He expressly mentions that, when first after his conversion he went again to Jerusalem, while he prayed in the temple he " was in a trance ; and SAW " the Lord. (Acts xxii. 17, 18.)

thus constituted an eye-witness of the fact of his resurrection, and qualified to be an apostle. "Am I not an apostle?" he asks, "am I not free? have I not SEEN Jesus Christ our Lord?" (1 Cor. ix. 1.) And, when urging on the Corinthians the evidence of the resurrection, he says of Christ: "he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once . . . after that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he WAS SEEN OF ME ALSO, as of one born out of due time." (1 Cor. xv. 5—8.)

It is clear, therefore, that Saul, in his way to Damascus received an apostolic commission. Our Lord himself *sent* him, as a *minister*, as a *witness*, as a *preacher* of the gospel: and he was to be a witness both of those things which he had then seen and heard, and of those in which our Lord should thereafter appear unto him—a witness (among other things) that Jesus was risen from the dead, that he had seen the Lord, and heard his voice from heaven. No specific mention, indeed, appears on this occasion to have been made either of authority to administer baptism and the Lord's supper, or of any supernatural gift: but authority to administer the sacraments was necessarily included in (though St. Paul did not consider it as the principal part of) the apostolic office; and the mission, on which he was sent, implied a promise of every gift necessary for its effectual execution. In fact he did both baptize (1 Cor. i. 14.) and administer the Lord's supper (1 Cor. x. 16.); he both spake with tongues,

(Cor. xiv. 18) and "wrought many miracles." (Acts passim.)

It was, therefore, on his journey to Damascus, that Saul of Tarsus not only was converted, but first received the apostolic commission. Fuller instruction in the truths of the gospel he afterwards received by direct revelation: for he had afterwards "visions and revelations of the Lord;" he was "caught up to the third heaven;" and such was "the abundance of the revelations" vouchsafed to him, that, lest thereby he "should be exalted above measure," there was given to him "a thorn in the flesh." (2 Cor. xii. 1, 2, 7.)

Ananias, indeed, a "disciple at Damascus," was sent by our Lord to Saul on a special commission, before Saul had entered on his apostolic office, and while his blindness continued; and, in executing this commission, Ananias laid his hands on Saul. But this was not any outward designation of Saul to the apostolic office, as we may see on a careful examination of the narrative.

"The Lord *said* unto" Ananias: "Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight." (Acts ix. 11, 12.) The only purpose, for which Ananias was directed to *lay his hand on Saul*, was "that he might receive his sight." But (it is further recorded) Ananias "entered into the house; and putting his hands

on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord *even* Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." "Receive thy sight." "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales : and he received sight forthwith." And Ananias "said, The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou ? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." And Saul "arose, and was baptized." (Acts ix. 17, 18. xxii. 13, 14—16.)

From the whole narrative of Ananias' visit it appears, that Ananias was sent to Saul for three purposes, first that Saul should receive his sight, secondly that he should be "filled with the Holy Ghost," and thirdly, that he should be baptized. But there is nothing necessarily connecting any one of these purposes with the laying on of the hands of Ananias, except the restoration of Saul's sight, with which (and with it *alone*) it is connected in the commission given to Ananias as recorded (and it is not recorded elsewhere) in Acts ix. 10—16. And it may be remarked, that while it is expressly recorded, that Ananias said to him "Receive thy sight," and that "he received his sight ;" it is not mentioned, either that Ananias said "Receive" or "Be filled with the Holy Ghost," or that Saul did receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of his hands.

Yet Saul's being "filled with the Holy Ghost" was to be, in some sense, a *consequence* of the visit of Ananias. If by this, a *further*¹ measure of sanctification be meant, that result followed, when he was baptized, and washed away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord—if the gift of supernatural powers, this also, though not connected with the laying on of hands, might be considered as, in some sense, the consequence of a visit, at which (after his sight had been restored) he was admitted by baptism into the church of Christ, and thus prepared for his next step, his journey into Arabia, in which he *seems* to have been endowed by the Holy Spirit himself with all the gifts and qualifications requisite for his apostolic office.

That he was so endowed during the time that he spent in Arabia, and that he did not consider himself as designated to the apostleship by the laying on of the hands of Ananias, may, I think, be fairly inferred from his own account of his journey into that country, and from what is recorded of his proceedings on his return to Damascus.

"When it pleased God," (he writes to the Galatians) "who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; imme-

¹ Saul had already exhibited marks of conversion. While lying on the ground, he inquired of Jesus, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" He obeyed without hesitation the directions which our Lord gave him. He fasted three days, and our Lord described to Ananias the state of Saul's soul by the remarkable expression. "Behold, he prayeth." (Acts ix. 6—11.)

diately I conferred not with flesh and blood : neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me ; but I went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.” (Gal. i. 15—17.) For what purpose did he go into Arabia ? He tells us not—Was it to preach the gospel ? We have no where any allusion to any ministerial labours of his in Arabia. He contrasts his journey to Arabia, with the journey which he might have been expected to take, a journey to Jerusalem to see the apostles. Does not this imply, that he went into Arabia under divine direction, and there received immediately from the Holy Spirit, without human intervention, those gifts which the apostles (as we shall see) were accustomed to confer by imposition of hands ?

On his return to Damascus, he entered on his ministry, and made full proof thereof. “ He preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” He “ increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that were at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him : ” (Acts ix. 20—23.) and the governor kept the city with a garrison, desirous to apprehend him : (2 Cor. xi. 32.) “ but their laying await was known unto Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket.” (Acts ix. 24, 25.) A remarkable accomplishment of the promise : “ delivering thee from the people and *from* the Gentiles.”

From Damascus he went to Jerusalem ; three years having then elapsed since his conversion. (Gal. i. 18.) But neither then did he receive any authority from the apostles. He saw, indeed, only two of them, Peter and James, as he himself declares to the Galatians with the solemnity of an oath, (Gal. i. 18—20.) obviously to guard against any inference that he received his apostolic commission from the apostles. (See Gal. ii. 6.) But at Jerusalem also he exercised his ministry. "He was with " the apostles "coming in and going out at Jerusalem : and he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians." (Acts ix. 28, 29.) And, while he prayed in the temple, he was "in a trance, and saw" the Lord "saying unto " him, "make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem : for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." Paul made some remonstrance : but our Lord said unto him : "Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." (Acts xxii. 17—21.) In fact the Grecians had conspired "to slay him : *which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea." (Acts ix. 29, 30.)

There is one other occasion, on which hands are recorded to have been laid on Saul, not by any apostle, but by certain prophets and teachers at Antioch. This imposition of hands clearly was not his designation to the apostolic office, for he had previously exercised his ministry for a year at Antioch, as well as first at Damascus and then at Jerusalem. (Acts xiii. 1—4. and xi. 26.) What the purport was of this

imposition of hands, we shall have to consider, when we examine in what sense Barnabas was called an apostle.

One thing is clear, that St. Paul expressly declares himself to be "an apostle not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father." (Gal. i. 1.) He not only calls himself an apostle, but insists on having exclusively received his apostleship from Christ, or (as he sometimes expresses it) from God. (Rom. i. 1—5, and 1 Cor. i. 1, and 2 Cor. i. 1, and Gal. i. 15—19, and Eph. i. 1, and Col. i. 1, and 1 Tim. i. 1, 11, 12, and 2 Tim. i. 1, and Tit. i. 1—3.) He speaks of himself as "not a whit behind," as "in nothing behind the very chiefest apostles;" and refers the Corinthians, for evidence of his apostleship, to "the signs of an apostle," which "were wrought among" them "in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." (2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 11, 12.) He exercised the same apostolic authority as they exercised, preaching the gospel,¹ bearing witness to the resurrection of our Lord,² whom he had seen since his ascension,³ denouncing⁴ and threatening⁵ miraculous punishments, having "the care of all the churches" resting upon him,⁶ and exercising authority over various churches.⁷

¹ Acts passim. ² Acts xxii. 1—10. and xxvi. 12—23. and xvii. 31, 32.

³ Acts ix. 17. and xxii. 14, 15. and 1 Cor. ix. 1. and xv. 5—8.

⁴ Acts xiii. 8—11.

⁵ 1 Cor. iv. 18—21. and 2 Cor. xiii. 2, 3, 10. and see ante Chap. ii.

⁶ 2 Cor. xi. 28.

⁷ Tit. and 1 and 2 Tim. passim, and 1 Cor. v. 1—5. and 2 Cor. ii. 6—10.

We find then Paul appointed an apostle in addition to the other twelve, after the number had been completed by the appointment of Matthias, and before any breach had been made in it. No reason is assigned either for the original number of twelve, or for the addition of this thirteenth apostle who speaks of himself as of "one born out of due time." (1 Cor. xv. 8.) But Paul was sent "far" from Jerusalem "to the Gentiles:" and he declares himself to be "the apostle of the Gentiles." (Rom. xi. 13.) We may, therefore, reasonably conjecture, that the twelve apostles (whose commission was in the first instance restricted to the children of Israel) were originally appointed, and the number afterwards completed by the appointment of Matthias, with reference to the number of the tribes, it being the will of our Lord, that the gospel should be first preached to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles (Luke xxiv. 47. Acts xiii. 14—16.): while the thirteenth apostle was afterwards appointed as "the apostle of the Gentiles." Not that Paul restricted his ministry to the Gentiles—he testified "both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xx. 21.) Neither did the other apostles restrict their ministry to the children of Israel. Peter was the apostle, through whose ministry (after Paul's appointment) the kingdom of God was opened to the uncircumcised Gentiles, on the conversion of Cornelius and his friends. (Acts x.) But the mission of the apostle Paul was principally, not exclusively, to the heathen:

that of the other twelve primarily and in the first instance, not exclusively, and (after a time) perhaps¹ not even principally, to the children of Israel.

Was, then, any apostle appointed subsequently to St. Paul? Herod "killed James the brother of John with the sword." (Acts xii. 2.) Was any one appointed *in his place*? Nothing of the sort is intimated in Scripture; though twice during a missionary tour, which Paul and Barnabas afterwards took together, they are called (ἀπόστολοι, literally "messengers," but in the authorized version) "apostles." (Acts xiv. 4, 14.) In what sense is Barnabas so called?

When Saul escaped from Damascus "to Jerusalem, he essayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles." (Acts ix. 26, 27.) It is clear, that at this time Barnabas was not an apostle; for St. Paul declares, that on this visit to Jerusalem he saw none of the apostles except Peter and James. (Gal. i. 18, 19.)

Afterwards "the church which was in Jerusalem," having heard that at Antioch "a great number" had "believed and turned unto the Lord," sent Bar-

¹ Peter addressed his second epistle "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us:" (2 Peter ii. 1.) Jude his epistle "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:" (Jude i.) and John the Apocalypse "to the seven churches which" were "in Asia." (Rev. i. 4.)

nabas to that city: "who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added to the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people." (Acts xi. 21—26.) Here was no assumption or exercise by Barnabas of apostolic authority: but, on the contrary, he fetched the apostle Paul to assist him in his work.

He is never called an apostle previously to his missionary tour with the apostle Paul. The way in which they were sent forth on this mission is thus recorded.

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia." (Acts xiii. 1—4.)

This, if Barnabas was ever appointed an apostle in the same sense as the twelve, was his appointment

—no other is recorded. But can this be an appointment or ordination of Barnabas to the apostleship?

Whatever commission this imposition of hands conferred on Barnabas, the same it conferred on Saul. It therefore could not be the apostolic commission—for Saul was already an apostle: he had received his apostolic commission from our Lord himself: and he always, as we have seen, disclaimed having received it either *of* men, or *by* men—still less did he receive it from prophets and teachers, themselves destitute (as those of Antioch except himself were) of apostolic authority.

The commission given by this imposition of hands alike to Barnabas and Saul—given (I should rather say) by the Holy Spirit, and designated by the laying on of hands—was a *special* and *temporary* commission. “The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” In obedience to this command, those to whom it was addressed “fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them,” and “sent *them* away.” After travelling through various countries, and preaching the gospel, and settling churches, they returned “to Antioch, from whence,” says the inspired historian, “they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled.” (Acts xiii. and xiv. 1—26.) They had *fulfilled the work for which they had been sent forth*; they had executed their *special* commission; it was at an end; and therefore it was other than and distinct from, the apostolic commission, which

Saul had previously received, which he exercised in the course of this journey, and which he never laid down.

It is in the narrative of this journey, that Barnabas and Saul are twice, and twice only, called apostles. St. Paul calls himself an apostle, and strongly asserts his apostolic authority in several epistles written after ¹ this special mission was ended. But Barnabas is never in Scripture, either before or after this journey, called an apostle ² or recorded to have exercised apostolic authority, though he is several times after this journey mentioned both in the Acts of the Apostles (xv.) and

¹ See 1 Cor. i. 1, and passim ii. 1—5. ix. 1, 2, 5; and 2 Cor. i. 1. xi. 5. xii, xiii; and Gal. i. 11, 12; and Eph. i. 1, and Col. i. 1, and 1 Tim. i. 1; and 2 Tim. i. 1, 11; and Tit. i. 1. The 1st. epistle to the Corinthians has been shown (See Appendix I.) to have been written during St. Paul's visit to Ephesus recorded in Acts xix; and consequently both the epistles to the Corinthians were written after the missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas. The epistles to the Galatians, and to Titus, and the first epistle to Timothy refer to events subsequent to this journey. (See Gal. ii. 1—14. and Tit. i. 5, and 1 Tim. i. 3.) The epistles to the Ephesians, and to the Colossians, and the second epistle to Timothy were written when Paul was a prisoner for the sake of the gospel, (See Eph. iv. 1, and Col. iv. 3, and 2 Tim. ii. 8, 9.) which he never was till after this journey.

² It has been thought, that in 1 Cor. iv. 9. St. Paul calls himself and Barnabas the last apostles; and that the words *ὁ Θεὸς ἡμᾶς τὰς ἀποστόλους ἐσχάτους ἀπέδειξεν*, (which in our authorized version are rendered "God hath set forth us the apostles last,") should be translated -- "God hath set forth us the last apostles." I see no sufficient reason for departing from the authorized version: and, if the proposed alteration were adopted, I should understand St. Paul as speaking of himself alone, though in the plural number, as elsewhere (See 2 Cor. vii. 2—13. Gal. i. 6—9.) he speaks of himself interchangeably in the plural and singular number. He had not mentioned Barnabas before the verse in question; and the whole context is more applicable to St. Paul than to any other individual, and has no particular application to Barnabas. In a subsequent passage, indeed, after asserting *his own* apostolic authority,

in the epistles of St. Paul. (1 Cor. ix. 6., and Gal. ii. 1., and Col. iv. 10.) In the epistle to the Galatians, indeed, St. Paul says: "When James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; ¹ that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." (Gal. ii. 9.) But his meaning, I conceive, is, that James, Peter and John, being satisfied of Paul's apostolic commission ("the grace given to ME"), gave to him and Barnabas, who had introduced him to the apostles (Acts ix. 27.), the right hand of Christian fellowship; that Paul, with Barnabas as his companion and helper, should go to the heathen, they (James, Peter, and John) going to the circumcision.

in the singular number, he asks—"Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and *as* the brethren of our Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?" (ix. 4—6.) It may perhaps be urged, that when St. Paul says—"Have we not power . . . as other" (rather "the other," οἱ λοιποὶ) "apostles," he includes Barnabas with himself under the word "WE," and consequently by implication calls Barnabas an apostle. But (1) I see no sufficient ground for including Barnabas under the word "WE" in the two first questions; and, (2) if Barnabas were included, it would not follow, that St. Paul called him an apostle. Suppose he had written—"I and Barnabas have we not power, as (the) other apostles, and *as* the brethren of our Lord and Cephas"—would it follow that Barnabas, as well as Paul, was an apostle? Being himself an apostle, St. Paul would necessarily speak of the twelve as "the other apostles," whether Barnabas were an apostle or not.

¹ "Fellowship"—*κοινωνίας*—the word does not import equality (1 Cor. i. 9. and 1 John i. 3); nor, necessarily, any thing more than that communion and fellowship which ought to subsist between all Christians. (Phil. i. 5.)

Lastly, if we examine the proceedings of Paul and Barnabas during the journey on which they were sent from Antioch, we shall not find Barnabas exercising any authority, or doing any act, peculiar to an apostle. The miraculous punishment inflicted on Elymas the sorcerer was inflicted by Saul alone, who is then for the first time called Paul (Acts xiii. 8—11). Both Paul and Barnabas, indeed, preached (Acts xiii. 5, 43, 46, 47; xiv. 1, 7, 14, 22, 25); both of them shook the dust off their feet against the inhabitants of a city which had expelled them (Acts xiii. 50, 51); both wrought miracles (Acts xiv. 3): but these were parts, as we have seen, of the commission given to the seventy disciples, as well as of that given to the apostles. They also “ordained¹ them elders in every church.” (Acts xiv. 23); that is to say, they laid hands on the individuals, thereby appointing them elders; but presbyters also, either alone or jointly with the apostle—for the present purpose it is immaterial whether alone or jointly—laid hands on Timothy when he was ordained² (1 Tim. iv. 14, and 2 Tim. i. 6.)

The result is this. We find no mention made of any

¹ I follow here the established version, which I think right. Another interpretation has been put upon the passage, which still less attributes to Barnabas an act of apostolic authority—The passage and this interpretation will be considered hereafter (ch. vii.)

² It is not material to the present purpose, whether “the laying on of the hands of the presbytery” (1 Tim. iv. 14.) was when Timothy was ordained presbyter, or when he was ordained to some other office, or whether the laying on of the apostle’s hands (2 Tim. i. 6.) was at the same, or another time. Both questions will be considered hereafter. (See ch. vii.)

appointment of Barnabas to the apostleship, either immediately by our Lord as in the case of the first twelve and of Paul, or mediately through the drawing of lots as in the case of Matthias : no mention of any exercise of or claim to apostolic authority by Barnabas himself : no mention of him as an apostle except in the two passages already quoted from the Acts. Those passages (Acts xiv. 4, 14) may be interpreted ¹ as simply referring to the special mission, on which he and Paul had been sent, and in which they were then engaged ; and, in

¹ The brethren, who with Titus were the bearers of St. Paul's 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians, are by the apostle called "the messengers" (ἀπόστολοι, apostles) "of the churches," (2 Cor. viii. 23.) So he calls Epaphroditus the "messenger" (ἀπόστολον, apostle) of the Philippians, (Phil. ii. 25. See iv. 18.) This is very different from the appellation, which, in the same epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. i. 1.) as well as in other epistles, (Eph.—Col.—Gal.—1 and 2 Tim.) he assumes to himself, "an apostle of Jesus Christ." An apostle, a messenger, of Jesus Christ is one office ; an apostle, a messenger, of the churches, another. He calls himself, indeed, also "the apostle of the Gentiles," meaning that he was sent to the Gentiles ; but this is the only passage (as far as I am aware) in which the word has that construction. In the passage, "*they are* the messengers of the churches" (2 Cor. viii. 23.), the context shows that the persons were messengers chosen and sent by the churches to travel with St. Paul and take charge of the alms raised by the churches (1b. 18—23.) : and, when the apostle wrote to the Philippians—"I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger (apostle), and he that ministered to my wants" (Phil. ii. 25.)—it is clear, both from the passage itself, and from St. Paul afterwards mentioning that he had "received of Epaphroditus, the things" which were sent from the Philippians (iv. 18.), that he called Epaphroditus their "messenger," simply as having been *sent* by them with relief to his necessities while a prisoner at Rome. The same apostle speaks of two, "who are of note among the apostles." But I do not conceive, that this includes them in the number of the apostles.

the absence of all mention either of his being appointed an apostle or of his exercising the apostolic office, I conceive, that they ought to be so interpreted; and that Barnabas is not to be considered as an apostle in the same sense as Paul and the twelve, but as being with Paul a messenger or apostle "sent forth by the Holy Ghost,"¹ on a special mission, "whereunto" He had "called them:" and I am the more confirmed in this opinion, by the peculiar manner in which Matthias was appointed and "numbered with the eleven apostles;" by the miraculous mode in which Saul was called to the apostleship by our Lord himself; and by the remarkable terms in which St. Paul, subsequently to this mission, writes of himself "as of one born out of due time" (1 Cor. xv. 8.) in the very epistle in which (as we have seen) he strongly asserts his apostleship—circumstances indicating, that *he only* had been added to the number of the apostles, after it had been specifically completed to twelve by the appointment of Matthias.

It has, indeed, been thought that Barnabas was appointed an apostle to supply the place of James whom Herod had put to death, as Matthias was appointed to fill the office from which Judas by transgression fell. But there is no intimation in Scripture of this being the case.

On the whole, I conclude, that, when once the

¹ The apostolic commission given to the twelve and to Saul is never so spoken of in Scripture. Our Lord himself sent the twelve—himself sent Saul.

number of apostles was completed to twelve by the appointment of Matthias, no addition was made to it except by the extraordinary call of Saul: nor was any subsequent vacancy supplied or to be supplied. The office has expired, so far as it was distinct from that of other ministers of the gospel. No minister now possesses the qualifications, which St. Peter required in the choice of an apostle in the place of Judas. To no minister is that *infallible* guidance of the Holy Spirit now vouchsafed, which our Lord promised to his apostles, and which was essential to the due exercise of many branches of the authority which he conferred upon them.

The apostolic office was, we may observe, in every case, conferred by our Lord himself—on the twelve first appointed during his ministry on earth, on Matthias by his determining the lot in answer to the prayer of the disciples, on Saul by an immediate revelation from heaven—in every case, without human intervention, except in so far as in the case of Matthias the disciples set up Barsabas and Matthias. The inference which I deduce is, that the apostolic office was personal to those thus appointed, and not by them to be transmitted to others; not to be transmitted to others in the plenitude in which it was conferred on them, though (as we have already in part seen, and shall more fully see in the sequel) they were both authorized to transmit to (or constituted instruments for conferring on) others *some* of the powers with which they were intrusted, and also commissioned

to commit to others *some* of the duties with which they were charged. Their office was, in several most important particulars which have been noticed, not only personal to themselves, but distinct from, and superior to, the office of every other minister of the gospel. The superiority of their office is further obvious from the tone of authority in which their epistles are written. St. Peter, indeed, addressing the elders, calls himself "also an elder."¹ (1 Pet. v. 1.) And St. John, writing when he was probably the only surviving apostle, styles himself "the elder." (2 John i. 3 John i.) We shall hereafter examine what the office of *elder* was. It is sufficient for the present to observe, that the apostles, though elders, were more than elders—they were evangelists²—they had the care, charge, and government of *all* the churches (2 Cor. xi. 28: James i. 1. 1 Peter i. 1. 2 Peter i. 1.)—they had, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, authority both to legislate and to judge and to rule, not in any one particular or local church—but in every church.

¹ Gr. ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος *the co-elder*.

² It was St. Paul's object to preach the gospel where it had not before been preached. (2 Cor. x. 13—16.)

CHAPTER IV.

MIRACULOUS POWERS.

OUR Lord, in his last discourse with his apostles, before his crucifixion, promised to “ send unto ” them “ from the Father, the Spirit of truth,” “ the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father ” would “ send in ” our Lord’s “ name ” (John xv. 26 ; xiv. 26) : and, shortly before his ascension, he renewed and confirmed the promise ; “ Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke xxiv. 49.) “ Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts i. 5.)

About the same time, and probably on the same occasion, our Lord gave a promise extending beyond the apostles : “ These signs shall follow them that believe ; In my name they shall cast out devils ; they shall speak with new tongues ; they shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall

not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” (Mark xvi. 17, 18.)

The promise specially made to the apostles, was *exactly* performed not many days after our Lord’s ascension: and, on the same occasion, the promise of signs to “follow them that believe,” was (if I mistake not) *begun* to be performed.

Immediately after the narrative (which has already been considered) of the eleven apostles and other disciples (in number about an hundred and twenty) being assembled, and appointing two, out of whom Matthias was chosen by lot to succeed Judas in the apostleship, and of his being “numbered with the eleven apostles” (Acts i. 13—26.): the inspired historian proceeds:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts ii. 1—4.)

On this occasion, *all* the disciples who were assembled were “filled with the Holy Ghost:” but it is not clear, whether any but the twelve apostles, were then gathered together. I am inclined to think, that the same individuals were together on the day of Pentecost as on the occasion recorded immediately before,

viz. when Matthias “was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

The expression—“THEY were ALL with one accord in one place”—refers more naturally to those who had been assembled on the former occasion, than to the apostles who, though mentioned in the verse immediately preceding, are mentioned only as “the eleven apostles” with whom Matthias was then numbered.

The prophecy, besides, of Joel, which Peter quoted as foretelling *that* outpouring of the Spirit (Acts ii. 16—18.), would have been but partially fulfilled on that occasion, unless it had rested on women as well as on men : but, as there *were* women¹ among the disciples assembled at the appointment of Matthias (Acts i. 14, 15.), it was fully accomplished on the day of Pentecost, if the same disciples were then assembled.

Peter also, on a subsequent occasion when he addressed “the apostles and brethren” at Jerusalem in vindication of his having eaten with Cornelius and his friends, said (in reference to this outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost) : “God gave them” (Cornelius and his friends) “the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed.” (Acts xi. 1—4, 15—17.) UNTO US WHO BELIEVED—he did *not* say, unto *us apostles*; whence we may reasonably infer, that, on the day of

¹ Women were endued with the Spirit of prophecy under the Christian (Acts xxi. 9.), as well as under the Mosaic dispensation. (Ex. xv. 20. Judges iv. 4.)

Pentecost, others besides the apostles received the gift of tongues.

But the question is not very important. For, when the extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost had drawn together a great multitude, the twelve stood up ; and Peter addressed the multitude, and preached Jesus risen from the dead and ascended into heaven, the eleven standing by him and thereby joining in his testimony. Thus the twelve apostles, as distinguished from any others who may have been assembled with them, began to execute their apostolic commission, bearing witness publicly of Jesus and the resurrection : and the Lord set his seal to their commission and confirmed the word spoken by the conversion of three thousand souls. (Acts ii. 14—41.)

I think it, therefore, the more probable opinion, that the other disciples, who had been assembled with the eleven apostles at the appointment of Matthias, were also assembled with the twelve on the day of Pentecost ; and that these disciples, while they recognised the apostolic authority of Peter and the eleven as entitling them to take the lead, partook with them (though not in equal measure) of the outpouring of the Spirit and the gift of *new tongues*.

We are now naturally led to consider more particularly the extent of the promise—"these signs shall follow them that believe"—and the first question is, whether it is a promise in perpetuity to the church, or only for a season. The inquiry is important : and it comes appropriately in this place ; for the apostle says : " God

hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." (1 Cor. xii. 28.) If then the promise were in perpetuity, we might distinguish the true church by "the signs" which "follow them that believe;" we should find in the true church supernatural gifts either of prophecy, or of miracles, or of healings, or of tongues: and we should have classes of ministers in the church who (independently of any human designation) would carry about with them the testimonials of their divine commission—But, if the promise was only for a season, then we have not *this* criterion of the true church: and, if prophets and miracles and healings and tongues (as well as apostles) were to cease, the different orders of permanent ministers in the church, which we shall have to consider, will be much reduced in number.

Now this inquiry may, I think, be brought to a short issue; because it can be shewn, that no provision was made for perpetuating supernatural gifts in the church. These gifts (as we have seen) were bestowed on the apostles, and on others also: on the seventy disciples, and (it seems) on the disciples assembled with the apostles at the day of Pentecost. But in no instance is it recorded, that any one, except our Lord himself or one of his apostles, conferred or professed to confer these gifts on others: nor is any instance recorded of even an apostle conferring or professing to confer on any other individual the power to transmit to others

the supernatural gifts bestowed on himself. On the contrary we shall, upon inquiry, find it strongly implied in Scripture, that no one but an apostle had *power to confer any supernatural gift* ; and that even an apostle could not transmit *that* power to another. We shall be brought, I think, necessarily to this conclusion by examining the events recorded in the eighth chapter of Acts.

After the martyrdom of Stephen, there arose “ a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem ; and they were scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles.” Then Philip (not the apostle¹) “ went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them,” and wrought miracles among them. The people believed and were baptized : and, among others, Simon, “ which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria,” “ was baptized,” and “ continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John : who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy

¹ The *apostles* remained at Jerusalem, while the *other* disciples were scattered abroad (1.); of which other disciples, *this* Philip was one (4, 5.) And we trace him in this eighth chapter to Cæsarea (40.); where we afterwards find residing “ Philip the evangelist, which was *one of the seven* ” (Acts xxi. 8.)—viz. of the seven chosen to administer the alms of the church at Jerusalem (Acts vi. 1—5.)—obviously the same individual,

Ghost : (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them ; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the APOSTLES' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts viii. 1—19.)—he meant not the graces, but the miraculous gifts, of the Holy Ghost. His "heart" was "not right in the sight of God." (ib. 21.) He had been observing the miracles wrought by Philip ; but he was unable to discern in believers, still less did he covet, the graces of the Holy Spirit. Simon's cupidity was excited ; and he desired to purchase not only the power to perform miracles, but power to confer that gift on others. Philip, though he wrought miracles himself, neither conferred nor professed to confer on others any supernatural gift. Simon preferred not to him any application similar to that which he preferred to the apostles. It was not till the apostles came to Samaria, that supernatural gifts were bestowed on those who had not (as Philip had) previously received them. Then the apostles by imposition of hands (with prayer) conferred on believers the Holy Ghost—miraculous powers. It is clear, from the whole narrative, that to the apostles, and to the apostles only, all parties looked as the instruments¹ for communicating supernatural gifts.

¹ To the power of communicating supernatural gifts, as exclusively apostolic, and evidencing his own apostolic authority in opposition to the

While, however, on this and other occasions the apostles, by imposition of hands, conferred supernatural gifts, they neither on this nor on any other occasion gave, or claimed authority to give, to any other individual power to confer such gifts on others. The inference is, that they were not authorized to transmit this power to others; and consequently that no provision was made for perpetuating miraculous powers in the church.¹

The Holy Spirit, it is true, was, on several distinct occasions after the ascension, poured out without the laying on of an apostle's hands—first, on the day of Pentecost—next, when Peter and John, being released

Judaizing teachers who had “bewitched” the Galatians, St. Paul seems to appeal when he writes: “He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith.” (Gal. iii. 5.) He says indeed (not “by laying on of my hands,” but) “by the hearing of faith.” Perhaps the Holy Spirit had been given after he had preached to the Galatians, as after Peter had preached to Cornelius and his friends.

¹ Bishop Kaye (in the History of the Church illustrated by the writings of Tertullian, p. 98.) says, “To adopt the language of confidence on such a subject, would be a mark no less of folly, than presumption; but I may be allowed to state the conclusion to which I have myself been led, by a comparison of the statement in the book of Acts, with the writings of the Fathers of the second century. My conclusion is, that the power of working miracles was not extended beyond the disciples, upon whom the apostles conferred it by imposition of their hands.” His Lordship means, I presume, that such persons had no power further to transmit it: for he could not mean to say, that, in the times of the apostles, no disciples except those on whom they laid their hands possessed miraculous powers. I think he ably and effectually disposes of what the Fathers who lived in the middle and end of the second century, and at a later period, say respecting miracles. (Ib. p. 95, 96. et seq.)

from imprisonment, returned to their own company—and again, when Peter preached to Cornelius and his friends. St. Paul, also, after enumerating “diversities of gifts,” adds: “all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” (1 Cor. xii. 4—11.) Whence it may be inferred, that the Holy Spirit, in those days, not unfrequently conferred supernatural powers without any human intervention. Still, as the apostles (and they alone) were invested with authority to confer on others by imposition of hands miraculous gifts, and as they were not empowered to transmit that authority to others, we may reasonably conclude that the *promise* of such gifts, whether with or without intervention of an apostle, was limited to the lives of the apostles and of those on whom (during our Lord’s ministry or the ministry of his apostles) such gifts were conferred: and, while it would be presumptuous to say, that the Spirit who “divideth to every man severally as he will” has wholly and *for ever* withdrawn his miraculous gifts from the church, we have no ground for considering miraculous powers as a mark distinguishing the true church from the apostacy; but on the contrary we are warned against “false prophets,” who “shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect” (Mark xiii. 22.); against that “Wicked” One, “whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Thess. ii. 8, 9.); against the “beast” who “doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven

on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he hath power to do." (Rev. xiii. 13, 14.) Miraculous powers were conferred on the church—not in perpetuity, or as a sign to distinguish the true from an apostate church, but for a season, as a testimony of the truth of the gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, while the infant, persecuted, church needed such a sign. The traitor Judas, as well as the other apostles, was endued with power to work miracles.

Another question respecting miracles is this : whether an individual, on whom power to work miracles had been conferred, could exercise it on any occasion, and at his own discretion : and I think there are several passages in Scripture, from which it may be inferred that the gifted individual could *then* only exercise his gift and perform a miracle,¹ when influenced so to do by the Holy Spirit, and inspired with *undoubting* faith that the miracle would be wrought according to his word or in answer to his prayer ; analogous to the case of the prophets, who "spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i. 21.)

¹ I do not know, that it is necessary to except any miracles as having been wrought by the gifted person *unconsciously*. The sick, indeed, were cured by "the shadow of Peter passing by" and overshadowing them (Acts v. 15.); and from Paul's "body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them ; and the evil spirits went out of them." (Acts xix. 12.) And we are not informed, whether, on these occasions, the apostle was conscious "that virtue had gone out of him," as our Lord was when the woman was healed by touching his garment." (Mark v. 27—30.)

In the instances of miraculous punishment inflicted on Ananias and Sapphira, St. Peter evidently spake under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; for it was only by express revelation that he knew the falsehood with which he charged them. (Acts v. 1—10.) And St. Paul, in foretelling the blindness which immediately fell on Elymas, was, we are expressly told, “filled with the Holy Ghost.” (Acts xiii. 9—11.)

In like manner in working miracles of mercy, the apostles and disciples (we shall find) acted under special guidance from above.

St. Paul writes to the Philippians, respecting their messenger Epaphroditus, who had ministered to his wants during his imprisonment at Rome. “He was sick and nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.” (Phil. ii. 25—28.) It should seem from this passage, that the apostle, richly as he was endowed with miraculous powers, and much as he desired the restoration of Epaphroditus to health, did not work a miracle in his favour; but that God (in answer doubtless to the apostle’s prayer) raised Epaphroditus up in the usual course of his Providence. His recovery was not, as in the cases of miraculous cures, perfect: his health still required care.

While our Lord was on the mountain of transfiguration, a lunatic was brought to his disciples to be cured,

and they could not heal him. Our Lord, having come down, cast out the devil. "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matt. xvii. 14—21.)

When the disciples marvelled at the fig-tree, which had withered at our Lord's word, Jesus "said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and DOUBT NOT, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive." ¹ (Matt. xxi. 17—22.)

The inability of the disciples to heal the lunatic is ascribed to their unbelief: and, both on that occasion and on the occasion of the blighted fig-tree, power to

¹ These words were addressed to the disciples, who accompanied our Lord in his walks between Jerusalem and Bethany previously to his last passover, and consequently addressed to the apostles, his only stated attendants. The parallel passage in St. Mark, however, is expressed in terms rather more general: "Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that WHOSOEVER shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and SHALL NOT DOUBT in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever YE desire, when ye pray, BELIEVE that ye receive *them*, and YE shall have *them*." (Mark xi. 22—24.)

remove mountains¹ was promised to the disciples, provided they had faith. On the occasion of the withered fig-tree, our Lord required in his disciples for the working of miracles *undoubting faith*, while on the occasion of their failure to cure the lunatic, he required only "faith as a grain of mustard seed:" but faith, though small, may be unwavering, free from doubt; and such faith seems to be required in those endued with power to perform miracles ere they can exercise it.

This will be illustrated by what occurred, when Peter walked on the sea. He said to Jesus, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus." (Matt. xiv. 28, 29.) Thus far Peter's faith, though small—not equal to a severe trial—was free from doubt. "But when he saw the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." His weak faith was now shaken. "He was afraid." He

¹ "To remove mountains" seems to have been a proverbial expression for "to do very difficult things:" and these promises have by some commentators been considered as referring, though *especially*, not *exclusively* to the case of miracles (See Scott on the passage)—as including a promise to every true believer, that by faith he shall be enabled to overcome obstacles in his way to heaven, as difficult for the natural man to overcome as to remove a mountain. This view of the promise is countenanced by a similar promise made on another occasion, when the apostles, feeling the difficulty of obeying our Lord's command to forgive a repenting brother though he trespass against them seven times in one day, "said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamore tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." (Luke xvii. 3—6.)

doubted. His faith indeed did not altogether fail—he still believed Jesus to be able to save him, and cried to him for help—but he doubted his own power to walk on the sea—perhaps he doubted whether he was authorized to make the attempt. “He was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of LITTLE FAITH, wherefore didst thou DOUBT.” (Matt. xiv. 30, 31.)

I conclude, therefore, that an individual endued with power to work miracles, could *then* only exercise¹ it, when influenced so to do by the Holy Spirit, and inspired with undoubting faith in his power to exercise it, or in the efficacy of the prayer which he was prompted to offer up.

Sometimes indeed faith was required in the person seeking to be healed, or to have a miracle performed. (Mark ix. 14—27. John xi. 39—44.) But this was probably the ground, on which in such cases the gifted individual was led to believe, that he was authorized to exercise his gift. Paul, it is recorded, “steadfastly beholding” the cripple at Lystra, “and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,” wrought the miracle, and healed the man. (Acts xiv. 8—10.) *This* faith, however, faith in the individual to be healed, does not seem to have been *always* required. To the lame man who lay at the beautiful gate of the temple, Peter with

¹ Whether a gifted individual was ever made the *unconscious* instrument of working a miracle, it is not important to determine, as I have already remarked.

John said "Look on us. And he gave heed unto them expecting to receive something of them"—not a cure, but "an alms" which he had asked. (Acts iii. 2—5.) Yet the apostles miraculously healed him: and, though Peter ascribed the cure to the "name" of Jesus "through faith in his name"—"yea the faith which is by him," (Acts iii. 16.)—this faith, as the whole narrative imports, was not the faith of the cripple, but the faith of the apostles wrought in them by Jesus himself. (ἡ πίστις ἣ δι' αὐτοῦ)

Before I conclude this subject, I must notice a passage, which bears on the question of miracles, and to which reference has already been made when the promise of remitting and retaining sins was examined. It requires careful consideration.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James v. 14, 15.)

Independently of the context, the passage itself contains clear marks, that the *promise* relates to the case of *miraculous* cures. The apostle directs the elders to anoint the sick in the name of the Lord—so the apostles themselves, when sent forth by our Lord endued with power "to heal all manner of sickness," (Matt. x. 1.) had "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*." (Mark vi. 13.) Again—the promise is—"the prayer of faith shall save the sick"

—it is made therefore to *such* prayer, to prayer accompanied (I conceive) with that *undoubting* faith, which, as we have seen, our Lord required as necessary to the working of miracles. St. James adds : “ and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” Now the apostle Paul declares, that “ all have sinned ” (Rom. iii. 23) ; and the apostle John, that “ if we say that we have not sinned, we make ” God “ a liar, and his word is not in us.” (1 John i. 10). When therefore, St. James puts it hypothetically—“ if he have committed sins ”—he means, “ if he have committed sins for which his sickness is a chastisement ”—then, in answer to the prayer of faith offered up by the elders, the *temporal* chastisement will be removed.

This is the interpretation, which, independently of the context, the passage would require : and it is strongly confirmed by the verses which immediately follow.

“ Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual ¹ fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain : and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” (v. 16—18.)

The withholding first, and then the granting, of rain

¹ Gr. *ἐνεργουμένη*—which Parkhurst renders “ inspired,” inwrought by the Holy Spirit.

in answer to the prayer of Elijah, was clearly miraculous. In neither case is his prayer recorded in the Old Testament : but, in each case, his prophecy is recorded¹ of what would happen. He “said unto Ahab, *As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*” (1 Kings xvii. 1.) And, after the slaughter of the prophets of Baal, he told Ahab that the rain was coming : and it came. (1 Kings xviii. 41—45.) This reference, therefore, to Elijah and miraculous events strongly confirms Parkhurst’s rendering of the passage immediately preceding—viz. “The inspired prayer of a righteous man availeth much”—for it was to illustrate this doctrine that the apostle cited the case of Elijah. The passage therefore refers, at least *primarily*, to miraculous cures.

The apostle, indeed, seems to have had a wider meaning. The direction, that the sick man should send for the elders is general : and a blessing, a spiritual blessing, might be expected from their counsel and prayers, even though no one of them should be commissioned to perform a miraculous cure. The direction also, which we find in the midst of the passage—“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed”—is still more general. The confession is not directed to be made to the elders,

¹ Whether he prayed, when “he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees” (1 Kings xviii. 42.), we are not informed : and he had *previously* said to Ahab “*there is a sound of abundance of rain.*” (Ib. 41.)

as distinguished from other Christians ; nor are *their* intercessory prayers exclusively to be sought.

We cannot interpret the passage as a promise, that in every case the elders should be enabled to heal the sick by praying over him and anointing him with oil—such a promise would virtually enable the elders to confer immortality on whom they would. The promise of a miraculous cure is only to the “ prayer of faith ”—of *that* faith, to which our Lord ascribes power to “ remove mountains.” This limitation of the promise is confirmed by the case of Epaphroditus, who doubtless sent for Paul in his sickness and had the benefit of the apostle’s prayers and was restored to health, but does not appear to have been raised up by a miraculous cure.¹

This promise, therefore, is not made in perpetuity to the church. It was to last only while miracles continued.

It may also be observed, that the direction is to send, not for one who has the gift of healing, not for *an* elder, but for “ the elders of the church.” We may reasonably infer, that the apostle had two objects in view. The sick man would at all events have their pastoral instruction and spiritual consolation and intercessory prayers : and might be led to repent and to seek and obtain forgiveness of his sins through the blood of the cross, even should he not be raised up to health. But among these elders there might be one or more endued with the gift of healing, and enabled to offer over him “ the prayer of faith : ” *then* the sick

¹ Phil. ii. 25—28. See ante.

man would be "raised up." Miraculous powers were bestowed on the early church in great abundance. One main object of the visit of Peter and John to the church of Samaria was to confer on the disciples the gifts of the Spirit (Acts viii. 14—17) : and, when Paul on his second visit to Ephesus found there certain disciples, in number about twelve, his first step (after giving them fuller and more explicit instruction and baptizing them) was to lay "*his* hands upon them," whereupon "the Holy Ghost came on them : and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." (Acts xix. 1—7.) We may also infer from his first epistle to the Corinthians, and from his epistle to the Ephesians, that the gifts of the Spirit abounded in the churches of Corinth and of Ephesus (1 Cor. xii, xiii, xiv. Eph. iv) ; and from his epistle to the Galatians, that miracles were wrought in the churches of Galatia. (Gal. iii. 5.) And, though the office of elder was distinct from that of one who wrought miracles, we may reasonably conjecture, that, in each church, some at least of the elders were appointed from among those previously endued with supernatural powers, or were afterwards endued therewith. When, therefore, a sick man, in those days, called for "the elders of the church," there would probably come among them some, who, *if* directed by the Holy Spirit, and enabled to offer up "the prayer of faith," would obtain for him a supernatural cure.

CHAPTER V.

THE SEVEN.

THE first appointment, after our Lord's ascension, of ministers in the church, which we find recorded in Scripture, is that of the "seven," the proceedings respecting whom are related in Acts vi.

I propose considering this appointment separately, and in the first instance, not only because it is the first, but because the particulars both of the appointment and of the duties belonging to the office are fully set forth ; and further because it seems to me to have been an office of a special and temporary nature, though to that of deacon in the primitive church some similar duties appertained.

At first the disciples at Jerusalem had "all things in common" (Acts ii. 44, 45. iv. 32.): though even then it was not *required* of every disciple to bring his whole property into the common stock. (Acts v. 3, 4.) The apostles, originally, managed (either personally or

by others) the common property (Acts iv. 34—3): but, “when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because¹ their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” (Acts vi. 1—4.) The multitude accordingly chose “Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them.” (Acts vi. 5, 6.) Thus the apostles devolved on these seven men (either alone or jointly with others)² “the daily ministration,” i. e. the distribution of pecuniary aid out of the common property, in providing for the wants of the poorer members. Were I to select a

¹ “A murmuring . . . because,” Greek *γογγυσμὸς . . . ὅτι*, which may (perhaps) be rendered, “a muttering [or ‘complaining’] . . . that,” so as neither to affirm or deny the truth of the complaint.

² It has by some (see Archbishop Whateley on the Kingdom of Christ, p. 84—89, and the extract there given from the Encyclopædia Metropolitana on Ecclesiastical History) been thought that these seven were Grecians *added* to Hebrews, to whom the charge of the property had previously been committed. But we hear nothing of these Hebrews: nor is the question material to the present inquiry.

word descriptive of their office, I should call them *treasurers* or *stewards*. The community of goods, which gave rise to this appointment, does not seem to have continued long; probably it ceased when the disciples were scattered, upon the persecution which followed the martyrdom of Stephen. (Acts viii. 1.) We read nothing more of this community of goods in scripture; but we have frequent mention of contributions made, or to be made, by the disciples in one part of the world, to relieve the wants of the brethren in another part (Acts xi. 29, 30; xxiv. 17; Rom. xv. 26; and 1 Cor. xvi. 1—4; and 2 Cor. viii. 1—21; ix. 1—12); and these contributions are (particularly in the epistles to the Corinthians) mentioned in terms which necessarily import that the disciples (even those residing in one place, or united into one church) had not then all things in common. The various exhortations also to the rich, scattered throughout the apostolic epistles, clearly show that there were then in the Christian churches rich and poor; and consequently that community of goods did not then exist. And, with the community of goods, the *special* office of the seven would cease, as having arisen out of the circumstance of the disciples *at Jerusalem* having *at first* had, in a sense, all things in common.

In fact, the office (at least as far as “the seven” were concerned) *seems* to have ceased when Stephen, one of the seven, suffered martyrdom and the disciples, except the apostles, were thereupon scattered abroad. On that occasion, Philip went to Samaria; and we

thence trace him to Cæsarea (Acts viii. 1—5, and 28—40); where, at a much later period (St. Paul's last journey to Jerusalem), we find him residing (Acts xxi. 8). The other five, or the survivors of them, were probably scattered at the same time. We hear nothing more of them, or of any persons appointed to supply their place. The office, the "daily ministration," if it continued, could be exercised only by persons residing at Jerusalem.

Subsequently to this scattering, and not very long after, we find that the disciples at Antioch, "every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa: which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." (Acts xi. 29, 30.) On this passage, we may observe, 1st, that the common property of which "the seven" were the stewards was by this time exhausted, as the brethren in Judæa needed relief; 2ndly, that the disciples of Antioch were of different *ability* to contribute, and consequently had not all things in common; and 3rdly, that they sent their contributions, not to *the seven*, or their successors, but to *the elders*.¹ If the *office* of "the seven" had continued to this time, we should have expected the money to have been sent to those who then held the office.

But *some*, at least, of the seven held and exercised *another ministry* in the church, besides that to which

¹ This is the first mention made of *elders* in the Christian church—who *these elders* were, we shall have to consider hereafter.

they were appointed over "the daily ministration." "Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people:" and "there arose certain" men "disputing with him;" and they were not able "to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." (Acts vi. 8—10.) Philip is expressly called "the evangelist" (Acts xxi. 8): and he did the work of an evangelist. He preached the gospel, wrought miracles, cast out devils, and administered baptism. (Acts viii. 5—12.)

There is, however, no ground for supposing that the seven, when they were chosen by the multitude and the apostles laid their hands on them, derived from this imposition of hands their commission to preach, or baptize, or perform miracles, or do the work of an evangelist. The plain meaning of the narrative is, that, by the laying on of the apostles' hands and prayer, the seven were set apart (not to the ministry in general, but) to the specific office to which they had been elected by the multitude, to the administration of the goods of the church: and it is distinctly stated, that they were so elected, as being already "full of the Holy Ghost," that is, endued with miraculous gifts.¹ Probably they were either of the seventy disciples, whom our Lord had commissioned during his ministry

¹ Such is the meaning of the expression—"filled with the Holy Ghost"—in Acts ii. 4, and xiii. 9; though, in other places (see Acts xiii. 52), it may mean *endued with the graces of the Spirit*. In the passage under consideration, the apostles meant, *endued with miraculous gifts*; for they referred to something which the brethren could discern and judge of.

on earth, or of the disciples on whom the tongues had sat on the day of Pentecost.

From the whole narrative of the appointment of "the seven," though the precise office to which they were appointed does not now exist in the church, we may draw the following conclusions.

1. It is desirable that the higher ministers of the church should, as far as practicable, be relieved from the charge of its secular concerns; and that the money of the church should be entrusted to persons chosen by the church, though it *may* be expedient that their choice be guided by the advice, and confirmed by the sanction, of superior ministers.¹

2. Yet such an office is not incompatible with the ministry.

3. Even when the office is temporary, the individuals elected *may* be set apart to it by prayer and imposition of hands—as Barnabas and the apostle Paul were set apart for a special and temporary mission by prayer, and the laying on of hands of "certain prophets and teachers" at Antioch.²

¹ When, at a subsequent period, the churches of Macedonia and Corinth raised a contribution for the relief of the saints at Jerusalem, the money was taken to Jerusalem by brethren chosen by the churches, who accompanied St. Paul with it to Jerusalem. The apostle refused to take the charge upon himself, thus "providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." It does not appear, that the apostle interfered in the choice of these "messengers of the churches," either by previous advice or by subsequent sanction. (1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4, and 2 Cor. viii. 1–4, 16–23.)

² See ante, chap. iv.

CHAPTER VI.

DIFFERENT CLASSES OF MINISTERS.

THE word (διάκονος), which in our authorized version is sometimes anglicised as *deacon*, and at other times rendered *minister*, and occasionally *servant*, is a word of very wide and general meaning. It is applicable to one who in any way serves another : and it is in the New Testament applied to the highest as well as to the lowest officers of the church, and to women as well as to men. While St. Paul mentions Phebe as “ a servant of the Church ” at Cenchrea (Rom. xvi. 1.) ; he asks the Corinthians—“ Who is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed ? ” (1 Cor. iii. 5.) He speaks also of others as ministers of God (1 Thess. iii. 2.), ministers in the Lord (Eph. vi. 21. Col. iv. 7.), ministers of Christ (Col. i. 7.); and of himself as a minister of the gospel (Col. i. 23.), a minister of the church (Col. i. 24, 25), a minister of the New Testament (2 Cor. iii. 6).

The same apostle, in two different epistles, furnishes us with an enumeration of ministers then recognized in the church.

The one enumeration is in his first epistle to the Corinthians. "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments,¹ diversities of tongues." (1 Cor. xii. 28.)

The other enumeration is in the epistle to the Ephesians. "He" (Jesus) "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." (Eph. iv. 11.)

¹ In this enumeration St. Paul distinguishes "governments" from "apostles." This, I think, alone would throw great doubt on the opinion expressed by the Rev. William Goode, in his valuable work on "The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice" (p. 63), viz. that "there is some evidence" that (those whom he calls) the "presidents of the churches," "had the title of Apostles." He refers to Rom. xvi. 7, where the expression *ἐπισήμοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις*—"of note among the apostles"—occurs. Surely this means, not "apostles of note," or "distinguished apostles," but "men received among or by the apostles with respect and distinction." He also quotes (p. 64.) the expression *ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν* (2 Cor. viii. 23), which I cannot but think is properly translated, in our authorized version "messengers of the churches," being brethren "chosen of the churches to travel," with the contribution raised by them for the saints. (See 18—21.) Though St. Paul calls himself "the apostle of the Gentiles," i. e. *to the Gentiles*, the twelve are never called "apostles of THE CHURCHES," but either "apostles" simply, or "apostles of JESUS CHRIST," &c. This observation will apply also to the only other passage quoted by Mr. Goode from scripture, viz. where St. Paul, writing to the Philippians, calls Epaphroditus *ὑμῶν ἀπόστολον* (Phil. ii. 25), "your messenger," (according to the authorized version). *He* also had been sent by the Philippians to minister to the apostle's wants (ib.) I see, therefore, no ground for considering him as president or ruler of the Philippian church.

Now it has been shewn,¹ that no provision was made for perpetuating in the church supernatural gifts : and they have long since ceased. Omitting, therefore, those whose office consisted in the exercise of such gifts, we shall reduce the first enumeration to apostles, teachers, helps,² governments : and the second enumeration to apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers—the pastors and teachers being combined together as one class.

It has also been shewn,³ that the apostles neither professed, nor were commissioned, to transmit to others the apostolic office. They were not commissioned to transmit to others that authority, the right exercise of which required the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit—a guidance promised to them in the execution of their *apostolic* office, and promised *to them only*. The apostolic office, therefore, in so far as it was dis-

¹ See ch. iii.

² There has been much diversity of opinion as to the meaning of the word (*ἀντιλήψεις*) translated “helps.” See the word in Rose’s edition of Parkhurst’s Lexicon. Macknight’s interpretation, as there given—“helpers,” “speaking by inspiration to the edification of the church”—makes them the same with the “prophets,” who are distinguished by the apostle in the same enumeration : and I see no ground for Vitranga’s interpretation, as given also by Parkhurst—“persons having the gift of interpreting foreign languages.” If either of these interpretations were adopted, the “helps” must also be omitted in reducing the first enumeration to ministers, whose office does not consist in the exercise of supernatural gifts. But I agree with Parkhurst in explaining the word by its cognate, *ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι*, as used in Acts xx. 35, where it is translated “to support :” and that the office of the “help” was *principally* to help the infirm and sick, though it may also include *otherwise* assisting superior ministers.

³ See antè, ch. ii.

tinct from that of other ministers, expired with the apostles.

Again, the “ evangelists ” mentioned in the second enumeration were *missionaries*, whose office it was to go among the heathen, preach the gospel, and form new churches ; and who were also occasionally sent from place to place to execute commissions given them by the apostles :¹ and in this they were distinguished from the resident ministers of settled churches.

Omitting, therefore, apostles and evangelists (apostles because their apostolic office ceased with them—evangelists because they were missionaries, not stated ministers of any one church), we have remaining (as *resident ministers of settled churches, whose offices were of a nature to be permanent*) in the first enumeration (1) governments, (2) teachers, (3) helps ; and in the second enumeration pastors and teachers. We might from this comparison² alone be led to conjecture that

¹ Evangelists, according to Parkhurst, were “ assistants to the apostles in propagating the gospel, and whom accordingly they sent from place to place, to execute such particular commissions as they thought proper to entrust them with.” Evangelists *sometimes* were in this way assistants to the apostles, as we shall see Timothy and Titus to have been : but this was *not* (I think) *always* the case ; for “ Philip the evangelist ” did, without (as far as appears) any specific direction from an apostle, the work of a *missionary*, preaching, baptizing, and performing miracles. See Acts viii. 1—13, 26—42 ; xxi. 8 ; and the observations thereon, *antè*, ch. v.

² Perhaps we may consider the “ governments ” of the first enumeration as including both the “ evangelists,” and (in so far as they were rulers) the “ pastors ” of the second. The “ teachers ” of both enumerations will then coincide : and there will only remain the “ helps ” of the first, without a correlative in the second, enumeration.

the office of ruling was not always separated from that of teaching; and that the pastors were in some measure rulers as well as teachers of their respective flocks; while the care which a shepherd (the literal pastor) has to exercise over his sheep, would render this conjecture the more probable. But, if we examine the later epistles of St. Paul, those to Titus and Timothy,¹ we shall find this conjecture confirmed; and we shall trace in the *elder* the pastor and teacher, both ruling and instructing the disciples committed to his charge; and in the *deacon* the “help,” the assistant to the elder: while in the narrative of the journey, which Paul and Barnabas took together among the churches in an extensive circuit, we find it recorded that they ordained them elders in every city (Acts xiv. 23), no mention being made of any other minister; so that these elders must have exercised some rule over the disciples in these cities as well as taught them.

The epistle to Titus was written to him, when the apostle had left him in Crete to “set in order the things that” were “wanting, and ordain elders in every city.” (Tit. i. 5.) Deacons are not mentioned in this epistle, nor any other minister distinct from the elder. We find, indeed, an “overseer” mentioned (in the authorized version *bishop* (ib. 7); but it is sufficient to cite the whole passage, to shew that the words

¹ The epistles to the Ephesians and to the Corinthians were written before, and the epistles to Titus and Timothy after, St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. (See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, and Tate's *Continuous Hist. of St. Paul.*)

elder and *overseer* are used interchangeably. “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee : if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For an overseer,” (bishop, in the authorized version) “must be blameless ;” &c. (ib. 5—7.)

The same apostle uses the same words interchangeably in his first epistle to Timothy, written when he had gone into Macedonia, having desired Timothy to remain at Ephesus, and committed to him a charge over the church of that city. (1 Tim. i. 3, 4.) In that epistle the apostle gives to Timothy very particular directions as to the qualifications which he should require in an “overseer” (*bishop* in the authorized version) (iii. 1—7), and in a deacon (ib. 8—13) ; and also instructions as to Timothy’s behaviour towards an “elder” (1 Tim. v. 1, 17—20) : but, unless the apostle uses interchangeably the words overseer and elder, he is silent on the one hand as to the appointment and qualifications of an elder ; and silent on the other hand as to Timothy’s behaviour towards an overseer. Surely it were strange, that the apostle should give Timothy very precise directions respecting the character of those to be appointed overseers, but none respecting his behaviour towards them when appointed—also very minute directions respecting his behaviour towards elders, but none respecting the character of those to be appointed to that office : yet such is the case, unless

we consider him as using interchangeably in this epistle the words *overseer* and *elder*. That he does so use them cannot be doubted, if we refer to his charge to the "elders" of the church of Ephesus, wherein he exhorts them to take heed "to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost" had "made" them "overseers"¹ (Acts xx. 17, 28); and to his epistle to Titus, obviously written about the same time and with the same subjects in his mind.²

It is obvious to any one reading this first epistle to Timothy, that both elders and deacons were then recognized ministers of the church at Ephesus : and, though the same apostle makes no mention of deacons in his directions to Titus respecting the churches of Crete, we may reasonably conjecture, that before he left Titus in the island to "set in order the things that" were "wanting," (Tit i. 5,) he had verbally given him all necessary directions on that point. Indeed the office of deacon, and the obvious expediency of having such ministers in the church, might then be so well understood³ as to render any particular direction unnecessary.

On the whole I think it is clear, that, when these epistles to Titus and Timothy were written, elders and deacons were the recognized ministers of churches settled by the apostles.

¹ "Overseers." So the authorized version, and well; though it renders the same word "bishop" in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, and also in Phil. i. 1.

² See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, Ch. xiii. No. ii.

³ St. Paul, writing to the Philippians, addresses "the bishops," (overseers) "and deacons," (Phil. i. 1.)

The office of an *elder* was to be to the church what a shepherd or pastor is to his flock¹—to feed the people committed to his charge with the bread of life; to lead them to the living waters of salvation; to go before them and guide them: to overlook them and rule them; to watch over them, and guard them against “grievous wolves,” false teachers “speaking perverse things,” who (as the apostle foretold) would enter among the sheep. (Acts xx. 28—31.) In general—the office of an elder was to teach and to rule the church committed to his care. St. Paul notices both these duties, when he writes to Timothy: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour,² especially they who labour³ in the word and doctrine.” (1 Tim. v. 17.) St. Peter also exhorts the elders: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over *God’s* heritage,⁴ but being

¹ St. Paul charged the elders of Ephesus ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν (Acts xx. 17, 28.) and St. Peter exhorts the elders generally Ποιμάνετε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν πρόμνιον τοῦ Θεοῦ. (1 Pet. v. 1, 2.)—“SHEPHERDIZE the church,” “the flock of God.”

² “Honour,” τιμή—whether it should be rendered “honour,” or (as some think) “reward,” is immaterial for our *present* purpose, the maintenance of ministers not being under consideration.

³ “They who labour,” οἱ κοπιῶντες, from κοπιᾶω—“to toil, labour even to great fatigue and weariness.” (Rose’s Parkhurst.) “They who LABOUR in the word and doctrine,” are contrasted, not with those who do not preach *at all*, but with those who *take no pains* in preaching and teaching: so that I see no ground for the notion sometimes drawn from this passage, that there were *ruling elders*, who did not preach the gospel.

⁴ “Neither as being lords over *God’s* heritage.” So the translators

ensamples to the flock.” (1 Pet. v. 1—3.) They were not only to feed the flock, but to take the *oversight* thereof, that is, as *rulers*; for so the caution implies—not “as being lords over *God’s* heritage.” They were to rule the brethren, not indeed as lords rule their servants, but as parents rule their children: and they were to be shepherds to the sheep of Christ, feeding them with the word of God.

There is one other office of the elders noticed by St. James (v. 14, 15), that of working a miraculous cure by praying over the sick man and anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. But this part of their office has ceased with the power to work miracles.¹

The duties of a *deacon* are not in Scripture laid down so definitively as those incumbent on the elder. The original word, which is anglicised “*deacon*” in the first epistle to Timothy, is (as we have seen) applied in other passages of Scripture sometimes to the highest, and sometimes to the lowest, officers of the church: but, as the word is used in that epistle, the office of *deacon* is clearly distinct from that of *elder*: and the very names of *elder* and *deacon* indicate, that the *elder* was the superior, and the *deacon* the subordinate, minister. There is little in the epistle to

of our authorized version have rendered: μηδ’ ὡς κατακυριεύοντες τῶν κλήρων. Some interpreters, not liking the word κλήρων to be applied to the laity, construe it as meaning, not the people of God, but the property of the church: a construction wholly out of harmony with the context, unless we degrade the expression—“feed the flock of God”—to a secular sense, as referring to the alms of the church.

¹ This passage has been examined, ante, chap. iv.

Timothy, beyond the proper meaning of the word deacon, to point out the specific nature of the deacon's office : but we may infer from the proper meaning of the word, that he was an assistant to the elder. It was probably the office of the deacon, to perform those duties connected with the church which the elder committed to him, and which would principally relate to the temporal concerns of the church, the administration of its alms, the care and relief of the sick, the aged, the infirm, and the poor. Even if this were the utmost extent of the deacon's office, such assistants would be very needful to the elders, who would be thereby enabled to give themselves more fully to their spiritual duties, and especially to the ministry of the word : whether the deacon was also to preach or teach does not appear. The apostle is silent on that point ; nor does he require in the deacon (as he does in the elder) any qualification peculiarly connected with such duties. Yet the concluding direction, which the apostle gives to Timothy respecting deacons, *seems* to lead to the conclusion, that the deacon was *allowed* to preach.

“ They ” (the apostle writes) “ that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim. iii. 13.) The apostle's meaning seems to be, that persons, by so using the office of a deacon, acquire further qualifications fitting them for a higher post if they are not previously so qualified, and give evidence of that fitness. This would be peculiarly the

case, if, either generally or under limitations, they had preached the gospel—they would have had a good training for the office of elder, when they had *thus* “used the office of a deacon well.”

Such, so far as we can discover in scripture, were the respective offices of elder and deacon. There is no distinct direction, either permitting or forbidding the individual to divest himself of the office. There is, however, a passage, which (though in its primary sense it *may* apply to disciples in general) *seems* to intimate that no one is fit for the ministry, who does not give up all intention of returning to merely secular employment.¹ One said to Jesus, “Lord, I will follow thee: but let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him: No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke ix. 61, 62.) We also find that John (whose surname was Mark) having travelled with Paul and Barnabas as their “minister,” and having afterwards quitted them at Perga during their journey, Paul refused to take him with them on a second journey, thinking “it not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.” The apostle persisted in this determination, though Barnabas (who was related to John Mark) was

¹ Of course ministers are not prohibited from working for a maintenance, where it is not otherwise provided for them, as St. Paul’s example shows. (See Acts xviii. 1—3; xx. 34; and 1 Cor. iv. 12; and 2 Thess. iii. 7—10.) But this will be considered hereafter. See post, ch. xi.

so bent on having him as their companion in travel, that, separating himself from St. Paul, he took John Mark with him. (Acts xiii. 5, 13 ; xv. 37—39 ; and Col. iv. 10.) The apostle Paul was afterwards reconciled to John Mark, and *seems* to have recognized him as a minister (Col. iv. 10, 11) ; and the apostle may have refused in the first instance to take John Mark a second time *with him* as a minister or assistant, lest he should again desert him.

From St. Paul's first epistle to Timothy, it has been shown that elders and deacons were then the recognized ministers of settled churches : but neither in that epistle nor in his epistle to Titus (though expressly written with reference to the settlement—the one of the church of Ephesus, the other of the churches in Crete), do we find any direction respecting any other class of ministers.¹ It will, however, on further ex-

¹ It has been thought, that the “widows” mentioned by St. Paul were “an order of deaconesses,” “regularly appointed to particular functions in the earliest churches.” (Abp. Whateley on the Kingdom of Christ, p. 128, 129.) This opinion, I presume, is founded on 1 Tim. v. 1—16. There certainly was *in the church at Ephesus*, when that epistle was written, a select “number” of widows (see ver. 9) : and it has been observed, that, as St. Paul directs none to “be taken into the number under threescore years old,” this could not be a *mere* selection of objects of charity. (Scott, in loc.) Yet, while specific directions were given by the apostle as to the character of those to be chosen, and the works of charity *already performed* by them, no specific functions are assigned to them. And from the whole context, I rather think, that these widows were *primarily* objects of Christian charity, *permanently and fully* maintained by the church at Ephesus, but that it was *also* expected of them that they should devote themselves to the *good works* in which they had previously exercised themselves. This view explains the exclusion of *younger* widows. But,

amination, appear that Titus and Timothy had, each of them, authority given to him by the apostle distinct from, and superior to, that of elder. And it remains to be inquired, what was the nature of that authority ; and whether there was, in the churches settled by the apostles, any class of ministers superior to those of elder and deacon ; in short, whether in those churches there were three distinct classes of ministers —bishops (in the modern sense of the word), elders (or presbyters), and deacons.¹

In writing to Titus, the apostle addresses him simply as “ Titus, *mine* own son after the common faith ” (i. 4) ; an address which seems to import, that Titus had been converted under the apostle’s ministry, and which at all events designates no office. The same apostle, writing at an earlier period to the Corinthians, says : “ Whether *any* do inquire of Titus, *he* is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you ” (2 Cor. viii. 23) : but this expression (and I find no other applied to Titus bearing on the inquiry) merely points him out as a minister of the gospel. He seems to have been an evangelist. Though the *designation* of evangelist is not expressly given to him, we find, in some of St. Paul’s earlier epistles, several notices

in any view of the passage, they were not ministers in the sense under consideration.

¹ Here and elsewhere, when I speak of distinct *classes* of ministers, or of the *threefold ministry*, I mean simply a distinction between ministers in respect of authority and office, irrespective of any question whether to each class a *different divine commission* is entrusted.

of Titus being employed in *duties* peculiar to the office.¹

We must, therefore, look into the epistle itself; and from the instructions given to Titus, deduce, as far as practicable, the nature of that office or authority which he was to exercise in Crete. The apostle expressly says, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain² elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." (i. 5.) This was an authority obviously more extensive than that of an elder. Again: "Speak thou" (the apostle writes) "the things which become sound doctrine" (ii. 1.); into the particulars of which he then enters (ii. 2—14), adding: "these things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." (ii. 15.) Further authority the apostle (in the same epistle) confers on Titus. "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (iii. 10, 11.) An heretic, Titus was to "reject:"³ and this authority does not appear to have been given to elders—the elders (or overseers) whom Titus was to appoint were "to convince the gainsayers." (i. 9.)

¹ See 2 Cor. ii. 13; vii. 6, 7, 13—15, viii. 6, 16; xii. 18; Gal. ii. 1.

² *Ordain*—καταστήσης—"appoint"—the word has no etymological reference to *laying on of hands*.

³ Gr. παραιτοῦ—the same word as is used by the apostle, when he exhorts Timothy to "refuse profane and old wives' fables" (1 Tim. iv. 7); to "refuse" the younger widows (ib. v. 11); to "avoid" foolish and unlearned questions (2 Tim. ii. 23); and when he warns the Hebrews that they "refuse not him that speaketh" (Heb. xii. 25).

Such was the commission given to Titus : and it clearly included power over *all* the congregations in Crete, and authority to ordain, or (if I may be allowed a less ecclesiastical word) to appoint *elders in every city* in the island. The *duties*, therefore, of his office were those of a modern bishop ; but I think his commission in Crete was temporary—not permanent.

It appears from the epistle itself, that, when Titus had accomplished the object for which the apostle had left him in Crete, when he had set in order the things that were wanting, and had appointed elders in every city (Titus i. 5) he was to quit the island and proceed to other scenes of labour.¹ He was to join the apostle in the winter at Nicopolis. “ When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus,² be diligent to come unto me at Nicopolis : for I have determined there to winter.” (Titus iii. 12). Nor does this epistle furnish any intimation, that the apostle intended him, after this visit, to return to his charge in Crete. In fact we find that he was afterwards³ at Rome with the apostle during

¹ This was the opinion of Whitby, as quoted by Scott (Introduction to the Epistle to Titus). See also Tate’s Continuous History of St. Paul, pp. 120, 121, 123.

² It has been conjectured, that either Artemas or Tychicus was to succeed Titus in Crete (Tate’s Continuous History, 123); but the conjecture seems to me to rest on a very slender foundation. Tychicus we find afterwards sent by the apostle from Rome to Ephesus (2 Tim. 12). If either Artemas or Tychicus was appointed bishop of Crete, it does not follow that Titus had first been so.

³ The Epistle to Titus was written between St. Paul’s two imprisonments; the second to Timothy during his last. (See Tate’s Continuous History of St. Paul, p. 123.)

his second imprisonment, and that he went from Rome to Dalmatia. (2 Tim. iv. 10). We have no later mention made of Titus; and I conclude, that the commission with which he was left in Crete, though episcopal in its nature, was, as regarded that island, temporary. He was an evangelist.

The apostle in his first epistle to Timothy addresses him nearly in the same terms as Titus—"Timothy, *my* own son in the faith," (1 Tim. i. 2)—giving him no other designation¹ in this epistle—nor elsewhere any designation importing a permanent office in any local church. But the instructions given to him in this epistle invested him with authority over the church of Ephesus clearly episcopal in its nature, though (it seems) not permanent in duration.

The apostle, leaving Ephesus and going to Macedonia, had requested Timothy "to abide still at Ephesus,"

¹ So in his second epistle he addresses him—"Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son:" and in several epistles to the churches, the apostle joins Timothy's name with his own in the salutation, generally calling him "*our* brother" (2 Cor. i. 1; Col. i. 1; Philem. 1); and in one epistle calling himself and Timothy "servants of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 1). Elsewhere he calls Timothy his "work-fellow" (Rom. xvi. 21), his "brother, and minister of God," and his "fellow-labourer in the Gospel of Christ" (1 Thess. iii. 2). The word (*συνεργός*), used in each of these latter passages, is of frequent occurrence in the epistles of St. Paul; and the connection in which it stands as regards Timothy (especially in the last-cited passage) seems to import that Timothy was an assistant to the apostle, and that he preached the gospel, as the apostle did. He was an evangelist, and accordingly the apostle exhorts him to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. iv. 5). None, however, of these various appellations, assign to Timothy any *permanent office in any local church*.

that he might "charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies" (1 Tim. i. 3, 4): and now, by this epistle, the apostle confirms the request; and also gives Timothy very full and minute directions as to his teaching and his conduct in the church during the apostle's absence, exhorting him to carry those directions into effect with authority.¹ Among other particulars, he instructs Timothy to oppose false teachers and false doctrine (1 Tim. i. 3—7, 18—20; iv. 1—7; vi. 3—5). He also, as we have seen, lays down the qualifications required in elders (whom he also calls *overseers*, or, as the word is rendered in our authorized version, *bishops*), and in deacons respectively (iii. 1—13): and he cautions Timothy against *laying hands* suddenly on any man (v. 22)—thereby implying, that he had authorized Timothy to ordain elders and deacons, or at least elders, by imposition of hands. He had also given Timothy authority over the elders. This is clearly implied in the cautions, which the epistle con-

¹ These directions include instructions as to public worship (1 Tim. ii. 1—9); as to the behaviour of women in the church, and their dress (ib. 9—15); as to his treatment of the elder and younger men, of the elder and younger women, and of widows (ib. v. 2, 3); as to the way in which children, grandchildren, and the church respectively (the latter especially in regard to the widow's fund) should treat widows, whether aged or young (ib. 4—16); as to the behaviour of servants or slaves to their masters (ib. vi. 1, 2); and as to the liberality which the rich should exercise (ib. 17—19). These instructions the apostle expected Timothy to urge on the church with authority—"These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth" (1 Tim. iv. 11, 12). "These things give in charge" (1 Tim. v. 7). "These things teach and exhort" (1 Tim. vi. 2). "Charge them that are rich in this world," &c. (1 Tim. vi. 17.)

tains respecting the exercise of this authority, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat *him* as [you would] a father."¹ (v. 1.) "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (ib. 19, 20). Timothy, therefore, was to receive an accusation (if tendered) against an elder; but he was to receive it in the presence of witnesses. If he was to receive an accusation, he was of course to act upon it: he was to judge of its truth or falsehood: and, if the elder had sinned, Timothy was to rebuke him publicly. This, I think, is the import of the direction. The words "them that sin" are, indeed, general; but the connection refers them principally, if not exclusively, to the accused elder. The apostle, it is true, had previously said, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat *him* as a father." But this direction, I conceive, related only to those minor and less open faults, which might fall under Timothy's own observation without becoming matter of public scandal or formal accusation. In such cases Timothy was not to rebuke, but to endeavour by mild entreaty to reclaim the offender. In the case of open and notorious sins, especially if brought before him by formal accusation, he was to proceed publicly, and censure publicly. Timothy was, therefore, invested by the apostle with authority over the church of Ephesus; authority not only to ordain elders

¹ Gr. παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα—The elder is *the father*, not Timothy. The elder was as a father to the church: and as such Timothy was to *entreat* him.

and deacons, but to govern and (when necessary) censure them.

It has, however, and I think on good grounds, been questioned, whether the commission given by the apostle to Timothy *respecting the church of Ephesus in particular* was more than temporary.

It has been sufficiently established by those who have examined the subject, that St. Paul left Titus in Crete and Timothy at Ephesus, in the interval between his two imprisonments at Rome; and that his epistle to Titus, and his first epistle to Timothy were both written shortly afterwards, and bear marks of having been written, the one about the same time as the other¹

¹ See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, ch. xi., and Tate's *Continuous History of St. Paul*, p. 119—124, and 160—162. In thus fixing the date of these epistles, they follow Bishop Pearson. Others have held that the first epistle to Timothy was written shortly after the apostle had left Ephesus in consequence of the tumult in that city. If this were the case, it would be *clear* that the apostle did not confer on Timothy any permanent office in the church of Ephesus when he left him there. The apostle had, before the tumult, purposed to visit Macedonia, and had sent thither Timothy and Erastus (Acts xix. 21, 22). From Ephesus St. Paul went into Macedonia and Greece: and, after he had so spent not many months, we find Timothy and others accompanying him into Asia, and going before and tarrying for him at Troas. (Acts xx. 1—7.) If Timothy, when the apostle quitted Ephesus on account of the tumult, had been left there as diocesan bishop, should we have so soon found him absent from his charge, accompanying the apostle in his travels? Again: in the solemn address, which the apostle shortly afterwards delivered at Miletus to the elders of the church of Ephesus, there is no allusion, even the most remote, either to Timothy or to his oversight of the church. The apostle, after speaking at length of his own labours, particularly among them, and of his own prospect of suffering, addresses them as those whom the Holy Ghost had made *overseers* (ἐπισκόπους) over the flock, yet he is silent as to Timothy having laid hands on any of them. He warns them of false teachers,

—while St. Paul's second epistle to Timothy was obviously written during his second imprisonment at Rome.¹

Taking then as the date of the first epistle to Timothy, the interval between the apostle's two imprisonments, I find nothing in that epistle which *conclusively* indicates, whether the authority committed by the apostle to Timothy was that of a settled diocesan bishop over the church at Ephesus, or the authority of an evangelist. But there are, in this epistle, passages *strongly* leading to the conclusion, that Timothy's commission was that of an evangelist: and he is, in the apostle's second epistle to him, expressly ex-

who should arise among them; he exhorts them to watch, and commends them to the grace of God: but he gives them no counsel to seek advice of Timothy, as the overseer or bishop whom he had appointed over them. (Acts xx. 17—35.) It is difficult to reconcile this address with the supposition that the first epistle to Timothy had been previously, and not long previously, written: and (I conceive) impossible to reconcile it with the opinion that Timothy was at that time bishop of Ephesus. If this epistle was written in the interval between the apostle's being driven from Ephesus and his addressing the elders of that church at Miletus, Timothy's authority at Ephesus must have ceased before that address—not indeed (as we might have expected from the epistle, iii. 14, 15) on the apostle's returning (for he had not returned) to Timothy at Ephesus, but on Timothy joining him in Greece. That Timothy was not bishop of Ephesus, in the modern sense of the term, at the time of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, may also be inferred from the epistle to the Philippians, written (see Phil. i. 13 and ii. 24) during that imprisonment. Timothy joins him in the salutation (Phil. i. 1); Timothy was, therefore, at Rome with him; and the apostle mentions his intention to send Timothy shortly, not to Ephesus, but to Philippi (ii. 19).

¹ See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, ch. xii. No. i., and Tate's *Continuous History of St. Paul*, p. 125—128. I am not aware of any controversy as to the date of this *second* epistle to Timothy.

horted to “do the work of an evangelist.” (2 Tim. iv. 5.)

St. Paul, after the usual salutation, begins, “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*” (1 Tim. i. 3, 4). The apostle in this passage requested Timothy to remain at Ephesus for a *special* purpose, implying that, but for such request, Timothy would have gone with him into Macedonia. All this is in perfect harmony with the notion of Timothy’s being an evangelist. But, had Timothy been bishop of Ephesus, the apostle would have had no occasion to beseech Timothy to remain there; nor would he have so limited the purpose for which he left him in that city.

The apostle then gives Timothy more extended directions, most of them as applicable to any other church as to that of Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 5 to iii. 13): and adds—“These things I write unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God.” (ib. iii. 14, 15). The apostle *seems* to have left Timothy at Ephesus, hoping to return to him soon: and he still had this hope when he wrote this epistle. But he now found that he might be detained longer than he expected: and he therefore gave Timothy these directions that he might know how to behave himself

in “the church of the living God.” This is just the sort of letter we might have expected the apostle to write to an evangelist, whom he had left behind him, expecting soon to join him again; and who, if longer separated from the apostle, might need further directions as to his conduct, whether in the Ephesian or in any other branch of “*the church of the living God.*” But the apostle would scarcely have so expressed himself, if he had previously ordained Timothy bishop of Ephesus, and given him (as he would in that case have given him) full instructions respecting his office, either before or at his ordination thereto.

These passages lead us to the inference, that the apostle had left Timothy at Ephesus as an evangelist, not as bishop (in the modern sense of the word) of the church in that city: and this inference is confirmed by an examination of the second epistle to Timothy, written during the apostle’s second imprisonment at Rome.

In that epistle, the apostle, while he exhorts Timothy to “do the work of an EVANGELIST” (2 Tim. iv. 5), takes no notice of the church at Ephesus, or of any connection as then subsisting, or having ever subsisted between it and Timothy. He calls Timothy to Rome, without expressing any regret at having occasion to summon him from his bishopric, and without any intimation that Timothy would soon return to his charge. He writes thus: “Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Dalmatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially the parchments. . . . Do thy diligence to come before winter.” (2 Tim. iv. 9—13, 21). This is just the way in which the apostle would, under the circumstances detailed, write to an evangelist, to whom he might wish to give his final instructions before suffering (as he was then expecting¹ to suffer) martyrdom: but no one, who has studied St. Paul’s other epistles, would have expected him, without further explanation, or further directions than this, to call away a bishop from his diocese.

We must therefore, consider both Timothy and Titus, not as bishops settled in any city or diocese with authority limited to a particular district, but as evangelists, who sometimes accompanied the apostle in his travels, assisting him in his labours; and at other times were employed by him in different places to preach the gospel among the heathen, settle Christian churches, ordain elders, and exercise for a time episcopal authority over the elders as well as over the disciples.

Titus and Timothy were not *diocesan* bishops: but the office, which each of them held, establishes the fact, that a class of ministers distinct from and superior to both elders and deacons, and invested with a

¹ See 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

superintending authority over both elders and deacons, is *consistent* with the practice of the primitive church as established by the apostle ; and even if we could discover in scripture no instance of *diocesan* episcopacy, we could not thence conclude that such an institution is unscriptural in principle. But we are not left without instances in the New Testament of diocesan episcopacy. A little consideration will shew, that the angels of the seven churches in Asia were bishops of those churches.

In the Apocalypse we find the apostle John directed by our Lord to write seven epistles in our Lord's name, one to *the angel* of each of "the seven churches which" were "in Asia." (Rev. i. ii. iii.) The *angel* of the church was clearly a minister of the church, a messenger or ambassador of God to the church. He was either the *only* minister, or the *chief or ruling* minister—not one of a body—or how was the individual addressed to be known ?¹ The church of Ephesus, one of these seven churches, had before this time (as we have already seen) several elders. The angel, therefore, of the church of Ephesus must have been, not one of the elders undistinguished from the others, but an individual, who then had the rule and oversight over both the elders and the church. The same address being used in the epistles to the other six churches, we may infer that the angels of those churches also held each a similar office therein. The commendation

¹ This is forcibly put by Mr. McNeile in his Lectures on the Church.

also given by our Lord to the angel of the church of Ephesus, for having "tried them which" said they were "apostles and" were "not" (Rev. ii. 2), and still more the reproof¹ given by our Lord to the angel of the church of Thyatira, for suffering a false prophetess to teach and seduce the servants of Christ (ii. 20), shew that the angels had authority in their respective churches, for the due exercise of which they were responsible to the great Head of the church. Hence we may conclude that, when St. John wrote the Apocalypse, diocesan episcopacy existed in all² the seven churches of Asia: and, although we do not find in that book the precise nature of their authority, we may reasonably infer, that it was similar to that which Timothy had previously exercised over the church of Ephesus,—similar in its nature, but more fixed and permanent.

If it be asked how it appears that the angel was a *permanent* minister of the church, that he was not an elder appointed for a limited time to preside over his brethren, and then to be succeeded by another elder, my answer is this: First, we have no analogy in the New Testament for such an alternation of authority

¹ To the angel of the church of Pergamos the apostle is directed to write: "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. . . . So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes." (Rev. ii. 14, 15.) This sounds like a reproof of the ruler of the church for suffering such heresies; but it *may* be a reproof of the church itself, and I therefore do not press it.

² I think this a fair inference: but it is sufficient for my argument, if the church of Ephesus alone be shown to have been episcopal when the apostle wrote the Apocalypse.

among the ministers of any local church. Secondly, and principally, the commendation given to the angel of the church of Ephesus, and the reproof given to the angel of the church of Thyatira, shew that their authority was permanent and exclusive—otherwise the elders as a body ruling their respective churches, not their temporary president, would have been commended or reproofed for the due or negligent exercise of their authority. The commendation, indeed, of the angel of the church of Ephesus is mixed up with other commendation, which seems rather to apply to the church at large, than to its ruler. (Rev. ii. 1—6.) But the reproof to the angel of the church of Thyatira is followed, first by threatenings against the followers of the false prophetess, and then by an address to the other members of the church, who are thus distinguished from the angel (Rev. ii. 20—24). The reproof is not to the angel merely as representing the whole church, but first to the angel, and then to “the rest” of the church. The fault of the church was, that it *listened* to the false prophetess—but that she was *suffered to teach*, was the fault of the rulers, or ruler—and as *one* only is addressed in the singular number, *that one, the angel*, must have been the chief ruler.

The result of this investigation of the different passages in the New Testament, from which we might deduce the several classes of ministers in the primitive church, is this, viz., that there were as *resident ministers of some local or particular churches*, bishops, elders, and deacons; and, as *ministers not attached to*

any one church, evangelists : that at first this threefold distinction of bishops, elders, and deacons, does not appear to have prevailed, at least universally, the words bishop and elder being used interchangeably in St. Paul's epistles and in the Acts of the apostles : and that there is no scriptural evidence of bishops (as distinguished from elders) having, in the time of the apostles, been introduced into any but the seven apocalyptic churches. One, at least, of these seven churches (the church at Ephesus) had several elders, and probably consisted of several congregations or particular churches. We may conjecture the same to have been the case with the other six. So, at an earlier period, the church of Philippi had, besides deacons, more than one bishop or elder. (Phil. i. 1.) And, from the expression, "the presbytery," used by St. Paul in writing to Timothy (1 Tim. iv. 14), we may infer that the elders of each *local* church acted together as a body for some purposes in superintending that church. Whether in each congregation, or *particular* church, there was a distinct elder, and whether any congregation had more than one elder, are questions which I do not discover any thing in scripture to determine.

No other class of ministers, except bishops, elders, and deacons, and except ministers whose offices were not intended to be perpetuated, and except evangelists whose office was of a missionary character, can be traced in the New Testament. The apostle Paul, indeed, writes to Timothy : "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou

to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. ii. 2). This passage will (in the following chapter) be fully considered in another connection. For the present purpose, it is sufficient to observe, that there exists not now, nor has for centuries existed, any class of ministers in the Christian church—distinct from bishops and elders (presbyters, priests, as they are now called)—which even *claims*¹ to have received these sayings of the apostle Paul in direct succession from Timothy: and that consequently these "faithful men" either did not constitute a distinct order of ministers, or were a temporary class of ministers instituted or selected for a special purpose, and under special circumstances, and not intended to be perpetuated when that purpose should have been accomplished and those circumstances should have ceased to exist.

In examining the institution by our Lord of baptism and the Lord's supper,² it was observed that to provide for the due administration of those ordinances was part of the commission entrusted by Him to his apostles. The apostles (as we have seen) did appoint ministers, and in particular ordain elders in the churches which they founded: and they did thereby provide for the administration of those ordinances: and though we find in scripture no direction assigning the administration of either the one or the other ordinance to any order or orders of ministers exclusively, there are some

¹ Of course I admit no such claim in any, nor is it made by any Protestant ministers.

² See ch. ii.

incidental notices on the subject which it will be proper to consider in this place.

Our Lord, as we have seen,¹ just before his ascension commanded his apostles: "Go ye, therefore, and teach" [make disciples of] "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) This passage *seems* to connect the administration of baptism with the preaching of the word. Yet the apostle Paul considered the preaching of the gospel as an office superior to that of administering baptism. "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (1 Cor. i. 17). "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not, whether I baptized any other" (1 Cor. i. 14—16). By whom were the other members of the Corinthian church baptized? probably by other ministers who preached the gospel among them: for it can scarcely be supposed, that, when baptism was principally administered to adults, and the admission of an unbelieving or worldly member into the church might have been attended with very serious evils, private Christians were indiscriminately allowed, of their own authority and on their own judgment, to administer to any one they pleased this initiatory ordinance. Yet I

¹ Antè ch. ii., where the two questions have been examined; (1) *by whom*, and (2) *to whom* baptism was to be administered.

can discover no *express* restriction of the administration to any order of ministers or even to ministers exclusively.

In examining¹ the circumstantial accounts, which the inspired writers give us, of the institution of the Lord's Supper, we found nothing to determine by whom it should be administered—nothing beyond this, that (as the language used imports) the apostles were commissioned to provide for its due and perpetual administration. They were so commissioned: yet we find, neither in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in the apostolic epistles, any *specific* direction, as to any *order of ministers*, to be exclusively intrusted with this office. The apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, *being* many, are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. x. 16, 17.) In this passage, the apostle uses the word *we*, first for those who administer, and then for those who partake of, the Lord's supper. He includes himself in both classes, and all who communicate in the latter. From the first use of the word *we* we may not unreasonably infer, that the apostle's custom (when present) was himself to bless the wine and break the bread; while by the latter use of *the same word* we are precluded from inferring, that in the

¹ See *antè* ch. ii.

former use of it any *exclusive* meaning was attached to it, or that none but the apostles and their successors were authorized to administer it. So far as any conclusion can be drawn from this passage, it is this—that, when the Lord's supper was administered in the time of the apostles, the wine was blessed and the bread broken by the minister who *presided* in the congregation—by the elder—by the overseer, or bishop, if present—by an apostle, if one were in the assembly. And this conclusion is countenanced by what is recorded to have taken place at Troas: “Upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. . . . And as Paul was long preaching,” Eutychus “fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing *him*, said, Trouble not yourselves ; for his life is in him. When he therefore had come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.” (Acts xx. 6—11.) The disciples, according to their custom, had come together “to break bread” (that is, to partake of the Lord's supper), and St. Paul (though probably there were elders in the church of Troas ¹) *brake bread*—administered (it *seems*) the Lord's supper. Such a practice would be in conformity with our Lord's example, who, *presiding at his own table*, blessed and brake the

¹ The apostle had previously been there twice. See Tate's Continuous History of St. Paul, p. 37, 66, 73, and compare 2 Cor. ii. 12 with Acts xvi. 8, 9 and xx. 4—6.

bread, and blessed the wine: and some such regulation would obviously be requisite for the good order of the church, and to prevent those disorders, which the apostle reproveth in the Corinthians—"when ye come together into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating, every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken." (1 Cor. xi. 20, 21.) Whether, if no elder or minister of higher rank were present in the congregation, the Lord's supper was administered in the apostolic church, cannot (it seems to me) be determined absolutely from scripture. We find on the one hand no distinct prohibition, nor on the other any recorded instance, of a such practice. We read, indeed, of the early Christians "continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house" (Acts ii. 46), worshipping God in the temple of Jerusalem, and (as some with great probability of truth understand the passage) celebrating the Lord's supper, sometimes in one private house and sometimes in another: but an apostle or an elder *might* be present on all these occasions. The twelve were then all in Jerusalem; ¹ and probably there were elders also, as we find, not long afterwards, mention made of elders at Jerusa-

¹ The statement of the disciples "breaking bread from house to house" follows immediately the narrative of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when all the twelve were present (Acts ii.): and afterwards, when the disciples at Jerusalem were scattered by the persecution on Stephen's martyrdom, the apostles still continued at Jerusalem (Acts viii. 1). Hence I infer, that at *this* time the twelve apostles were all at Jerusalem, or generally residing there.

lem (Acts xi. 30). Though, however, we have neither recorded practice, nor specific direction in Scripture to settle the question, yet, as the apostles appointed elders in every church which they founded, and thereby made (as they were commissioned to make) adequate provision for the administration of the Lord's Supper, we cannot reasonably imagine, that it was ever in their days administered except by an elder or a minister *having rule* over the disciples.

This, however, has been considered low ground to take in respect of ministerial authority: and it has been contended,¹ that the power of administering the Lord's Supper has been committed exclusively to the apostles and to those who derive a commission from them in unbroken succession. To support this proposition, one writer² speaks of the minister's "hands"

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 4 and 35.

² See Tracts for the Times, No. 4. The writer of another tract quotes, in support of the same proposition, the following passage. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. iv. 1.) When such a passage is quoted (see Tracts for the Times, No. 35, p. 2) for such a purpose, two propositions, neither of which is true, are tacitly assumed: 1st. that by "us" the apostle meant *the apostles and their successors*; 2dly. that by "mysteries of God" he meant *sacraments*, or the Lord's Supper. These assumptions are both of them unfounded. (1.) St. Paul is speaking *exclusively of himself*, and defending his own authority, in opposition to the schismatic teachers who were drawing away from him the Corinthian disciples. This is clear from the context: and he immediately adds; "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful; but with ME it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment"—thus, by the change of person from the plural to the singular, showing (as indeed is manifest from the whole context) that he is throughout speaking of *himself individually*. (2.) The "mysteries of God" are the sublime truths of the gospel. The

as conveying “the sacrifice,” and afterwards cites—“No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron” (Heb. v. 4)—thus misapplying to the Christian ministry and the Lord’s supper, what the apostle Paul says of the Aaronic priesthood and sacrifices. The apostle, in this passage and the context, is treating, not of the Christian ministry or sacraments, but of the *high-priesthood of Christ*, as having superseded that of Aaron, and with it all sacrifices for sin: nor could we, from the passage, even *if* the Lord’s supper were a sacrifice within its meaning, deduce any inference, but that it was to be administered only by one “called of God” to the office; it being left undetermined how the call was to be evidenced; for certainly the Christian ministry is not hereditary, as was Aaron’s priesthood. But in the institution of the Lord’s supper, as recorded in scripture, there is (as we have seen¹) nothing in any way indicating that it is a sacrifice for sin, or in any proper sense a sacrifice. It is a thankful *memorial* of the Great Sacrifice, which Jesus once for all offered on the cross for the sins of the whole world. It is not the officiating minister, who exclusively, or even principally, shows the Lord’s death in breaking the bread and blessing the wine: but the disciples are they, who as often as they *eat* that bread, and *drink*

word *mystery* (μυστήριον) is constantly used by St. Paul in this sense (1 Tim. iii. 9, 16, and Col. ii. 2, and 1 Cor. xv. 51, and xiii. 2); while it is never used in Scripture for the Lord’s Supper, as will be seen on consulting Rose’s Parkhurst, where all the passages in which the word occurs are collected.

¹ Antè ch. ii.

that cup, “do show the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

Under the Christian dispensation there is no sacrifice for sin, but the one sacrifice once offered on the cross; *no sacrificing priest*.¹ On this point, St. Paul’s argument, from the fifth to the tenth chapter (both inclusive) of his epistle to the Hebrews, is decisive. His argument is this—that Jesus, the High Priest of our profession, our High Priest abiding for ever, has offered up himself *once for all*, as a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world, has ascended up on high, and now sits at the right hand

¹ The word “priest” has unhappily crept into the Church as a corruption of “presbyter” or elder. The authorised version of the New Testament has not adopted the corruption: and in it, consequently, the priest (ἱερεὺς, sacerdos) is clearly distinguished from the elder or presbyter (πρεσβύτερος); the former being a minister of the Israelitish, the latter of the Christian, church. The Rhemish Testament has in several passages (Acts xiv. 23, and xv. 2, and 1 Tim. v. 17, 19, and Tit. i. 5, and James v. 14) rendered πρεσβύτερος, *priest*—for what purpose is obvious. Mr. Keble, in the Postscript to the 3rd edition of his Sermon on Tradition, p. 94, note 2 (I quote from the 4th edition), cites Rom. xv. 15 thus: “The grace that is given me of GOD, that I should be the *Minister* (λειτουργὸν) of JESUS CHRIST unto the Gentiles, *exercising the priest’s office* (ἱεροῦργούντα) in respect of the gospel of GOD: that the *offering up* (προσφερά) of the Gentiles might be acceptable, BEING SANCTIFIED BY THE HOLY GHOST: (ἡγιασμένη ἐν ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ ἉΓΙῳ)”—the italics and capitals are his—and he adds, “In which passage are four or five liturgical words.” But the expression, “Exercising the priest’s office in respect of the gospel,” conveys no very intelligible idea: “ministering the gospel” (as the words are rendered in the authorised version) has a very clear meaning, viz. *preaching* the gospel. “The offering up of the Gentiles” is their being set apart to the service of God. But surely the apostle did not mean, that he offered up either the gospel or the Gentiles *as a sacrifice* to God!

of God, ever making intercession for his people : that he has thus abolished the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, and with them the Aaronic priesthood, which was appointed to offer them up : and that, while those sacrifices never could take away sin, and were only types and shadows of his one sacrifice, that SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF was so sufficient, that there was no need for its being offered again. This great and fundamental doctrine of the sufficiency of the *one offering* of Jesus Christ for sin, while the inefficacy of the Mosaic sacrifices was evidenced by their being *often offered*, is urged on the Hebrews by the apostle in various forms, and with an earnestness of repetition, evincing the importance which he attached to it. “ Christ ” (he says) “ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true ; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us : NOR yet that he should offer himself OFTEN, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others ; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world : BUT NOW ONCE in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment : so Christ WAS ONCE OFFERED to bear the sins of many ; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by

year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered ? ” (Heb. ix. 24—28 ; x. 1, 2.) “ *It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me : in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein ; which are offered by the law ; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the OFFERING of the BODY of JESUS CHRIST ONCE ¹ for all. And every Priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins : but this man, after he had offered ONE SACRI-*

¹ The word in the original is strong—not simply ἀπαξ—but ἐφάπαξ—which in the authorised version is well rendered “once for all.” St. Paul’s argument is conclusive against the doctrine taught in the creed of pope Pius the IVth, that “in the mass there is offered to God a proper and propitiatory sacrifice ;” that there is therein “made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood” of Christ : and it is equally conclusive against every notion of any sacrifice (other than that of praise and thanksgiving) being offered in the Lord’s Supper. The argument shows every such dogma to be as derogatory to the *one sacrifice* offered by Jesus on the cross, as the adoption by Gentiles converted to Christianity of the Mosaic

FICE for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." (x. 4—12.) "For by ONE OFFERING he hath PERFECTED for ever them that are sanctified." (x. 14.) There remains, therefore, no further sacrifice, in the proper sense of the word, to be offered up under the Christian dispensation—no sacrifice, except the sacrifice of "a broken spirit" (Psalm li. 17), the "sacrifice of praise," which Christians are exhorted to offer to God *continually* (Heb. xiii. 15), "spiritual sacrifices," for the offering up of which all true Christians are "an holy priesthood," "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. ii. 5 and 9). For such sacrifices the church of Christ needs no other priesthood *on earth*, than that which

sacrifices would have been. Repeatedly had the Lord's Supper been celebrated in the interval between His crucifixion and the writing of the epistle to the Hebrews; and, if in the Lord's Supper there were any *proper and propitiatory sacrifice*, that sacrifice had on each of these occasions been offered up, so that Jesus Christ had been *often offered* up as a sacrifice before the apostle wrote to the Hebrews: yet he not only declares to them repeatedly and in various forms, that *Christ was once offered* to bear the sins of many; but he shows why (though the high priest after the order of Aaron *offered oftentimes the same sacrifices*) it was not necessary for Jesus to offer himself often. *Once sufficed*, because *by his one offering* He hath "PERFECTED FOR EVER them that are sanctified." From the repetition of the Mosaic sacrifices, the apostle conclusively argues, that *the law* could never thereby "make the comers thereunto perfect." If the sacrifice of the cross were in any sense repeated in the Lord's Supper, if "a proper and propitiatory sacrifice" were therein offered, it would equally follow from the frequent repetition of the Christian sacrifice, that the *gospel* could never by that sacrifice make the comers thereunto perfect—a conclusion little short of blasphemy—wickedly derogating from our Lord's atonement—and in direct contradiction to St. Paul's doctrine respecting our Lord's *one sacrifice* and its full efficacy.

alike belongs to all its members : and accordingly no mention is made in the New Testament of any order of men set apart as priests (*ιερεῖς*, sacerdotes) in the Christian church.

CHAPTER VII.

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS : AND THEREIN OF ORDINATION.

WE have now traced the introduction of evangelists, bishops, elders, and deacons into the Christian church. There were other ministers, whose offices, founded simply on the exercise of supernatural gifts, ceased when miraculous powers ceased in the church. Our concern is only, 1st, with evangelists, who were not attached to any particular or local church, though at times invested with a temporary authority over some local church, while at other times they accompanied and assisted the apostles in their travels; and 2ndly, with bishops, elders, and deacons, who were settled ministers of local or particular churches. Let us now inquire what light scripture throws on the *appointment* of these ministers, under which term I include both the *selection* of the individual for the office; and, where the nature of the office requires it,

his *ordination* or the designation of him or setting of him apart for the office. And, as in this inquiry we shall find instances of ministers ordained with imposition of hands, it may be useful first to consider shortly the principal occasions, whether relating to temporal or to ecclesiastical matters, on which that rite is in scripture recorded to have been used.

We find imposition of hands to have been used on occasions such as the five following.

1. The apostles conferred, as we have seen, *supernatural gifts* by laying on of hands: but such gifts were, without imposition of hands, conferred by our Lord on the twelve and on the seventy; and, after his ascension, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and at the conversion of Cornelius and his friends.

2. Sometimes *miraculous cures* were wrought with imposition of hands. And our Lord himself on several occasions laid his hands on the sick, and healed them. (Mark vi. 5. Luke iv. 40; xiii. 13.) He also promised to his disciples that they should lay hands on the sick, and the sick should recover (Mark xvi. 18). Ananias laid his hands on Saul, and Saul recovered his sight (Acts ix. 17, 18). Paul laid his hands on Publius, and healed him of a fever and bloody flux (Acts xxviii. 8). But imposition of hands was not necessary for this purpose. Our Lord, on many occasions, only spoke the word, and the sick—though sometimes absent—were healed. (Matt. viii. 5—13. Mark ii. 3—12;

Luke xvii. 12—19. John v. 1—9 ; ix. 1—7.) The sick also were healed by Peter, as he passed by and overshadowed them (Acts v. 15): and from Paul's "body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." (Acts xix. 12.) No case, indeed, is recorded, in which an evil spirit was cast out with the laying on of hands—probably to prevent, as far as possible, any appearance of intercourse with devils.

3. Sometimes the conferring of *spiritual benefits* was accompanied with imposition of hands: as when our Lord laid his hands on the children which were brought to him, and blessed them (Mark x. 13—16). But that prayer, without imposition of hands, may be effectual to the obtaining for others of spiritual blessings, is clear, both from the many examples of intercessory prayer, and from the repeated exhortations to the duty, which occur in the New Testament.

4. On some occasions individuals were set apart, by imposition of hands, for some *special and temporary work*, as in two cases which have been already considered—that of the Seven on whom the apostles laid their hands (Acts vi. 1—6); and that of Paul and Barnabas, who (though Paul was already an apostle) were, by express direction of the Holy Ghost, set apart by the church at Antioch for a special mission, certain prophets and teachers—not any apostle—laying hands on them. But imposition of hands does not appear to have been the universal, if indeed it was the

general, practice on such occasions. (See Acts viii. 14; xi. 29, 30; xv. 2, 3, 22, 30.)

5. We have, in the Old Testament, instances of *permanent offices in church and state* being conferred by imposition of hands (Numb. viii. 10; xxvii. 18—23): and, in one of these instances, Moses was commanded to lay his hands on Joshua, who is at the same time called “a man in whom *is* the Spirit” (Numb. xxvii. 18). But imposition of hands does not appear to have been the universal practice, and anointing seems to have been a more usual rite, under the Mosaic dispensation. (Exod. xxviii. 41; xxx. 30, 31; xl. 13, 15, 16. Lev. viii. 12; xvi. 32. Numb. iii. 3. and 1 Sam. x. 1; xvi. 12, 13; and 2 Sam. ii. 4; v. 3; and 1 Kings i. 34, 39; xix. 15, 16; and 2 Kings ix. 3, 6.) On no one occasion—not even when the twelve apostles were appointed, nor when the seventy disciples were sent forth—is our Lord recorded to have conferred office or authority by laying his hands on the individual. Nor (as far as appears) was either Matthias or Saul appointed by imposition of hands to the apostleship.¹

Such are the principal purposes for which imposition of hands is in scripture recorded to have been used: but for *no one* of such purposes does it appear to have been *invariably* used.

Let us now examine, what we can discover in the New Testament respecting the appointment of evan-

¹ See antè ch. iii.

gelists, bishops, elders, and deacons. It is remarkable, that, although we find recorded in the Acts of the Apostles the appointment by them of elders, and though we find in the epistles to Timothy and Titus various directions respecting the appointment by those evangelists of elders (sometimes called bishops, or overseers) and of deacons, we have nowhere in scripture any direction as to the manner in which the ministry should be *perpetuated*. There is, indeed, one passage, which is often quoted as containing such a direction ; but, on examination, it will be found not to bear such an interpretation. Reference has been already made to it.

“ The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim. ii. 2.)

There is in this passage nothing importing that those, whom the “ faithful men ” were to teach, were to be themselves teachers ; nothing indicating *how* the ministry was to be perpetuated. If, therefore, with some commentators, we understand the apostle as simply directing Timothy to instruct and appoint “ faithful men ” to be ministers of the gospel, we have no new class of ministers, no mode of transmitting the ministry, pointed out. If, on the other hand, we consider (as the passage would more naturally lead us to consider) the apostle as directing Timothy “ to commit to faithful men ” the truths which Timothy had heard the apostle publicly and authoritatively

teach, he is obviously not speaking of any *then known class of ministers* under the denomination of “faithful men;” for he says, “faithful men,” without the article, clearly pointing to a *selection* which Timothy was to make. The men so to be selected might be chosen from among the then recognized ministers of the church; but they were not, *as a class*, the same with the elders, or the same with the deacons, mentioned in the apostle’s former epistle to Timothy. The “faithful men,” whom Timothy was to select for this specific purpose, were to be (if a class at all) a *new class* of ministers. Did then the apostle, in this passage, direct Timothy to appoint, for the first time, “angels.” (bishops, as distinguished from elders) in the churches? This is the only interpretation which can make the passage bear on a perpetuation of the ministry. But can such an interpretation be reasonably put on the passage? Would the apostle, when first directing Timothy to establish this new class of ministers, a class superior to both elders and deacons—would the apostle have given to Timothy no further instruction respecting the duties or qualifications of bishops, than that they were to be “faithful men,” and “able to teach others?” Would he have been less particular, or less minute, than he had been in his former epistle respecting elders, whom he also calls overseers? Would he have said nothing to Timothy respecting the authority of a bishop to *rule both elders and deacons*?

I conclude that the “faithful men” mentioned in

this passage were not, *as a class*, the same with bishops, elders, or deacons, or with any or all of those classes—but men to be selected for the particular purpose of transmitting to others the great truths of the gospel, which Timothy had heard the apostle teach publicly and authoritatively. The apostle was making provision, *not for perpetuating the ministry*, but for spreading and preserving (until the canon of Scripture should be completed¹ and copies sufficiently multiplied) the knowledge of divine truth with as much accuracy as could be obtained through the instrumentality of fallible men. In the doctrine, which St. Paul taught publicly and authoritatively, he was (as well as in his epistles) preserved from all error by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:² but he had doubtless occasion to give many directions which, though important to the welfare of the church in the apostolic age, were not intended to be of perpetual obligation; and the passage under consideration contains no intimation, that either Timothy or the “faithful men” should be preserved from error (indeed the caution given as to the character of the men to be selected for the purpose seems to imply their liability to error) in transmitting the truths which Timothy had *heard* of the apostle—or that *this* method of transmitting those truths should be continued in perpetuity, or beyond those to whom the

¹ St. John had not then written either his Gospel or the Apocalypse, and probably not one of his three epistles.

² See *antè* ch. iii. St. Paul also tells the Thessalonians, that “the word of God, which” they had “HEARD of” him was not “the word of men but . . . the word of God.” (1 Thess. ii. 13.)

“ faithful men ” should teach them. Such a method, without a perpetual miracle, could not preserve divine truth in its purity : and the further it proceeded from the original fountain, the more corrupted the stream would become. Accordingly God, in his wisdom, has given us the Holy Scriptures, in which are contained all things necessary to salvation. In these inspired writings those things, which for a time were through Timothy committed orally to “ faithful men, or *such of those things as were of perpetual obligation*, are still more faithfully recorded and preserved. We have no trace in the present day of any class of ministers, depositaries of traditions handed down from the apostle Paul through Timothy : nor have we any reason to suppose, that such a class of men continued beyond those, whom the “ faithful men ” selected by Timothy taught. With them, we may conclude, *this* method of transmitting the truths of the gospel ceased, being superseded by the *written word*, which about the same time was completed and recognized as the rule of faith and practice.¹

This passage, therefore, has no reference to the *perpetuating* of the ministry, or to the *appointment of any permanent class of ministers* in the church : and we are left to gather the scriptural principle respecting

¹ St. Peter clearly intimates, that to the *written word alone* we can trust for the preservation of the truth. “ I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them* Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.” (2 Pet. i. 12, 15.)

the mode of appointing ministers from other passages in the New Testament.

Now we may, from the Acts of the Apostles and from the epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, gather some intimations as to the appointment of elders, deacons, and evangelists: but I can find nothing in scripture respecting the mode of appointing *bishops* (in the modern sense of the word, as distinguished from elders) or (in the language of the Apocalypse) “angels.” The setting apart, however, of Paul and Barnabas to their missionary journey,¹ suggests, that an elder, when appointed bishop, should be set apart to his *new* office by prayer with imposition of hands, though it does not establish the *necessity* of his being so set apart, still less of his being ordained or consecrated by another bishop.

The first mention of *elders* in the Christian Church occurs, when the disciples at Antioch having “determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judæa . . . sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul” (Acts xi. 29, 30). Who these elders were, or when or how appointed, we are not informed: but we afterwards find the elders at Jerusalem meeting with the apostles “to consider of” the question about circumcision, and joining with the apostles and brethren in the letters communicating the judgment of the council on that question (Acts xv. 6, 23). Probably they were of the seventy, or of those on whom the Holy Spirit had descended on the day of Pentecost.

¹ See antè ch. iii.

We have, however, in the Acts of the Apostles a particular account of the appointment of elders in other places. It occurs near the end of the missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas, to which reference has been already made. "Paul," says the inspired historian, "departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." (Acts xiv. 19—23). I have quoted the passage at length, as it stands in the authorized version, in order to shew by the connection and context, that Paul and Barnabas are the persons, and the *only* persons, of whom the sacred historian is writing, when, according to that version he says: "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord." The connection is still more clear in the original, which would be more literally rendered: "And having ordained [or appointed] *for* them¹ elders in every church, and having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the

¹ "Having ordained *for* them—χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς—the participle with the dative case αὐτοῖς "to" or "for them," not ἑαυτοῖς "to" or "for themselves," as it would have been, if those, over whom these elders were appointed, had themselves appointed or elected them.

Lord." The word, which our translators have rendered "*ordained*," has given rise to much controversy. It properly, and according to its etymology, means, *to extend the hand*; and hence, *to choose by lifting up the hands*. But it is also used by the best Greek writers, as well as by others, for *to elect* in general by that or any other method, and even for *to appoint* without any election by suffrage:¹ and in this particular instance it is clear from the grammatical construction, that the appointment or election (whichever of these terms be used) of these elders was made—not by the disciples—but by Paul and Barnabas *for* the disciples. I also

¹ Wolfius says—"χειροτονεῖν est per suffragia creare sive eligere . . Sed alii ne suffragia quidem, tanquam ad electionem necessaria, hac voce innui existimant." He then refers to Borsius in Collatione ad H. L. and Knatchbull in notis ad H. L., and Eunapius, and Lucian, and Bilson de perpetuâ Christi gubernatione, and Hug. Grotius de Imperio Summarum Potestatum circa sacra. Wolfius adds—"Fortassis tamen non errant qui electionem hanc seu constitutionem cum impositione manuum conjunctam fuisse arbitrantur. Eam enim jam tum receptam fuisse, ex 1 Tim. v. 22, patere illi existimant" [That epistle was written *after* St. Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus and gone to Macedonia: a period subsequent to the events recorded in Acts xiv.] "quamvis negari itidem non possit, tum presbyteros, tum episcopos etiam sine eâ constitutos fuisse." (Wolfius in loc.)

Suicer says: "το χειροτονεῖν in primâ et propriâ significatione designat electionem, quæ fit per suffragia manuum extensione data: notat eligere ad episcopatum nimirum ex usu Ecclesiastico, atque talis electio etiam à populo olim facta ut demonstravimus in voce ἑπίσκοπος, Num. ii. 1 sub. lit. ba."—He gives no instance of such popular election *in the times of the apostles*.—He also proves by examples from Xenophon and others, that χειροτονεῖν is used simply for *constituere, creare, designare*. The compound is clearly used in the Acts, where election by suffrage cannot be meant: "unto witnesses CHOSEN BEFORE OF GOD" (προκεχειροτονημένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ. (Acts x. 41.)

think, that the word translated “ordained” does in this place include the notion of imposition of hands; or rather, that it was selected on this occasion, because the appointment was made with imposition of hands—selected in preference to various other words¹ used elsewhere in the New Testament to express an appointment when unaccompanied with that rite. The word, it is said, and (I presume) truly said, is in no instance used by any good Greek writer for *to appoint by imposition of hands*—neither, it should be added, is there any other word² used in good Greek writers, by which that compound notion could have been expressed; and consequently, as he who lays his hand on another must for that purpose stretch it out, St. Luke might (with great propriety) use a word, which means primarily *to stretch forth the hand*, and secondarily to *elect* or *appoint*, as a proper word to express an appointment by laying on of hands. But it is not material, whether Paul and Barnabas ordained *by imposition of hands*

¹ “He” Jesus “ordained twelve” (Mark iii. 14). “The Lord appointed other seventy.” (Luke x. 1.) “Of these men . . . must one be ordained” (Acts i. 21, 22). “He” (Pharaoh) “made him” (Joseph) “governor over Egypt and all his house” (Acts vii. 10). In these four passages, the words translated respectively *ordained*, *appointed*, *ordained*, *made*, are all, in the original, different both from each other, and from *χειροτονεῖν*. The appointment in each case was, as far as appears, without imposition of hands.

² There is no Greek word compounded of *χείρ* and *τίθημι*; and, though *χειροθεσία* is used for imposition of hands by *ecclesiastical* writers, I do not find the word in the Index to Stephens’ Lexicon; though in the annexed Glossary there is “*χειροθεσία* Gestus, Gestu.” It may also be observed, that, in *ecclesiastical* writers, *χειροτονία*, as well as *χειροθεσία*, is used for ordination in its *ecclesiastical* sense. (Suicer in verbo.)

the elders whom they appointed on this missionary journey ; because we shall find, that before the apostle wrote his first epistle to Timothy, imposition of hands had become a recognized form of ordination in the church. The important circumstances to be noticed in this transaction are, that these elders were *appointed* by Paul and Barnabas, not by the people : and that, if they were ordained or appointed with imposition of hands, it was by Paul the apostle and Barnabas his companion in the mission that hands were laid on them.

Except in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, we find nothing more on the appointment of elders, nothing at all on the appointment of deacons ; for, as we have seen, the seven appointed to take charge of the daily ministration of the alms of the church were not deacons in the sense of *permanent* ministers of a particular or local church.

To Timothy the apostle writes—" Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins : keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. v. 22) : and, as the principal part of this epistle consists of directions to Timothy respecting elders and deacons, their duties and qualifications, and the authority which he was to exercise over them, we may conclude that, in this caution, the apostle refers to ordination. To what else could he refer ? Not to the conferring of any temporal or spiritual blessing unconnected with office, still less to the conferring of any supernatural gift. To such matters there is no allusion in the epistle : a caution so solemn seems scarcely necessary against suddenly con-

ferring a temporal or spiritual benefit unconnected with office : and the power of conferring on others a supernatural gift was, as we have seen, vested exclusively in the apostles, and not by them transmissible to others. We may, therefore, conclude that the apostle referred in this passage to ordination ; and the necessary inference is, that imposition of hands at ordination was, when the apostle wrote this epistle, a practice so well known and established, that *to lay hands on* a man, and *to ordain* him, were convertible terms. Both elders and deacons are mentioned in this epistle : and we may presume, that the caution given by the apostle applies to the ordination both of elders and of deacons. And, as the directions respecting the qualifications of elders and deacons, as well as the caution against precipitate ordination, are given to Timothy, not to the church, while no hint occurs of any one having any right to interfere with Timothy in the choice or appointment of ministers, we may conclude that the *whole appointment*, while he continued there, rested with him—especially, as, when the choice of “ the seven ” was referred to the people, the proceedings are minutely detailed (Acts vi. 1—6).

To Titus the same apostle writes—“ For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee ” (Titus i. 5). The word here rendered *ordain*¹ does not etymologically contain

¹ The same word is translated *to make* in Acts vii. 10 and in Heb. vii. 28 : and it is a compound of the word translated *to appoint* in Acts i. 23.

any allusion to imposition of hands, and may properly be translated *appointed*. It obviously *includes the whole appointment*—both the selection of the individual, and his designation (whether with or without imposition of hands) to the office. There is nothing further in this epistle to Titus relating to the appointment (except some directions as to the qualifications) of ministers—no allusion to the people interfering therein. It wholly rested with Titus.

There remain two, and (as far as I am aware) only two, other passages relating to the appointment of ministers—both of them in St. Paul's epistles to Timothy, and both referring (I think) to the ordination of Timothy himself as an *evangelist*. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. iv. 14). "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim. i. 6). There is a similarity of expression in these two passages, which leaves little room to doubt, that the apostle in both referred to the same gift and the same imposition of hands—joint imposition of hands, therefore, by *the apostle and the elders*: and a little consideration will confirm this view of the passages, and shew that they both refer to the office of an evangelist which Timothy held when these epistles were written.

The word translated *gift*, though more frequently used to express a gift of some supernatural power, is elsewhere used by the apostle in a general sense (Rom. xii. 6—8), to include the "ministry," and "teaching,"

and “exhortation,” as well as “prophecy.” Now it has been shewn, that the authority to confer on another a supernatural power was limited to the apostles; and (while on several occasions the apostles exercised this power) we find no instance of an elder even joining with an apostle in conferring any supernatural power by imposition of hands. We cannot, therefore, but conclude, that the gift which the apostle, in his first epistle to Timothy, mentions as having been bestowed on Timothy “with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery”—no allusion being made in *that* epistle to the apostle having joined therein—was not the gift of any supernatural power; but the ministerial office, accompanied (no doubt) with an abundant supply of the enlightening and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit to qualify him for the due execution of its duties. Nor can the gift, which the apostle in his second epistle to Timothy mentions as being in Timothy by the “putting on of” his own “hands,” and which he exhorts him to “*stir up*,¹ be a gift of miraculous powers: because (as we have seen²) such powers could be exercised only under the special direction of the Holy Spirit indicating that the occasion had occurred for performing a miracle, and consequently it did not belong to the possessor of such a gift to stir it

¹ To stir up—ἀναξωπυρεῖν—“to revive a fire which is almost dead, and hidden under the ashes” (Parkhurst)—a remarkable word—obviously applicable to the graces, rather than to the extraordinary gifts, of the Spirit—to faith, love, and zeal, rather than to prophecy or the working of miracles.

² See antè ch. iv.

up. The gift, therefore, which St. Paul mentions in his second, as well as the gift which he mentions in his first epistle to Timothy, must have been the ministerial office and the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit connected with it, not the gift of any miraculous power. And this conclusion is established by the consideration, that, while both epistles contain ample directions and earnest exhortations touching the exercise of his ministry and the cultivation of the graces essential thereto, no allusion is made in either of the epistles to miraculous powers, nor is any intimation given in scripture of Timothy having wrought any miracle.

The result therefore is, that in each passage the apostle refers to the ministerial office, and the graces necessary for its due exercise. Nor will it be difficult to shew, that the office, to which in both cases he refers, was one and the same—the office of an evangelist, who generally accompanied the apostle in his travels, and (without being the settled minister of any particular or local church) was occasionally sent by him to, or left by him at, some place with a superintending or episcopal authority over its church or churches. The apostle Paul found Timothy at Lystra, where he became a disciple; and Paul took him to travel with him, having first circumcised him because his mother was a Jewess (Acts xvi. 1—3). We afterwards, and previously to the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, find Timothy often the companion of St. Paul; but sometimes left behind him, and at other times sent before him, apparently on business (though on what particular business

is not mentioned) connected with the spread of the gospel, (Acts xvi. to xx. both inclusive, *passim*). And the apostle, in several of his epistles written during this period, speaks of Timothy in terms importing that he was his assistant¹ in the ministry, and sometimes joins Timothy's name with his own in the salutation (1 Thess. i. 1, and iii. 2, and 2 Thess. i. 1, and 1 Cor. xvi. 10, and 2 Cor. i. 1, 19). We next find Timothy at Rome with the apostle during his first imprisonment; for in three of the epistles written during that period his name is joined in the salutation with that of the apostle (Philip. i. 1, and Col. i. 1, and Philem. 1), and in one of those epistles the apostle expresses an intention of sending Timothy to Philippi to learn the state of the church in that city (Philip. ii. 19). All these employments were such as properly belonged to an evangelist. At a still later period we find Timothy left at Ephesus by St. Paul with a special authority over the church in that place.²

It was while he was so left at Ephesus, that the apostle wrote to him his first epistle; and it was at a still later date, during St. Paul's second imprisonment at Rome, that the apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy. Now, if we examine that second epistle from the beginning to the end, we shall discover no trace of any *new* ministry having, during the interval between the two epistles, been conferred on Timothy. The apostle ex-

¹ See *antè* ch. vi.

² As to the dates of St. Paul's epistles, see Tate's Continuous History of St. Paul.

horts him “to do the work of an EVANGELIST:” and the whole of the second epistle relates to the duties of an evangelist, acting more peculiarly as the apostle’s assistant,—duties precisely of the same description as those performed by Timothy before he was left at Ephesus by the apostle. It must, therefore, have been before the date of the first epistle, that the hands both of the apostle and of the presbytery were laid upon Timothy. But we can trace no new ministry conferred on Timothy, from the time when he was taken by the apostle as his companion in his travels (Acts xvi. 1—3) to the time when the same apostle left him at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3)—unless the charge and authority which the apostle then gave him over the church in that city, be considered as a new ministry. If, therefore, the hands of the presbytery were laid on Timothy without the apostle joining therein, it must have been either when the apostle took him at Lystra to accompany him on his travels, or when the apostle left him at Ephesus. Is it in the least probable, that, on either occasion, the elders *without* the apostle laid hands on Timothy? Is it probable, that the apostle, having selected Timothy for his assistant in the ministry, should leave it to the elders of Lystra to ordain him to that office? Is it probable that the apostle, leaving Timothy at Ephesus, with authority to regulate the church and correct abuses which had crept into it, should have committed to the elders of that church the ordination of Timothy to such an office, without himself joining in the imposition of hands?

The two passages relate, then, to the same ordination—to an ordination of Timothy (before the date of St. Paul's first epistle to him), by the laying-on of the hands both of the apostle and of the presbytery. Was this ordination performed at Lystra, when Paul chose Timothy for his assistant; or at Ephesus, when the apostle left him there with a superintending or episcopal authority? Not, I think, on the latter, but on the former, occasion. The apostle, in his *first* epistle, does not mention his having himself laid hands on Timothy, unless he included himself in "the presbytery:" but surely he would have more *specifically* mentioned the imposition of *his own hands*, if he had joined with the elders of Ephesus in so conferring on Timothy authority over the church in that city. Further: the exhortation—"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery"—occurs in the midst of other exhortations, pointing out the means which Timothy was to use for maintaining spiritual life in himself, and so prospering in the ministry, while the apostle mentions the particular purpose for which he had left Timothy at Ephesus, in an earlier part of the epistle, without the most distant allusion to ordination. (1 Tim. i. 3, *et seq.*) Surely, if on that occasion the apostle and the presbytery of Ephesus had laid their hands upon him, the apostle would not have omitted all reference to the circumstance, when detailing the purpose for which he left Timothy behind.

Thus, I think, we have legitimately arrived at the conclusion, that there was no imposition of hands, when the apostle left Timothy at Ephesus with authority over the church in that city; and that we must refer to some earlier ordination the laying on Timothy of the hands both of the presbytery and of the apostle. Probably this ordination took place at Lystra, when *Paul would have Timothy* “to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him.” (Acts xvi. 3.)

The result, therefore, of the investigation is this. The apostle and the presbytery joined in ordaining Timothy, by imposition of hands, to the office of an evangelist, the apostle having first selected him for the office.

Such were the measures taken by the apostles to provide a ministry, a permanent ministry, in execution of our Lord's last command, and in reliance on his last promise.¹ They appointed, from time to time, other ministers to preach the gospel and administer baptism, *some* of whom were expressly directed to appoint other ministers. But we find *no rule* laid down by the apostles, either authorizing *any one class of ministers* to appoint or ordain others, or limiting that authority to any one class.

We have, however, some intimations, from which a *principle* may be gathered on the subject. On the one hand, we have no instance recorded in scripture of any minister being appointed or ordained without the

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

concurrence, *either* of an apostle, *or* of an individual (like Titus) specially directed by an apostle to ordain elders in a particular district, *or* of an individual (like Timothy) invested by an apostle (though it may be only for a time) with authority over a local church and its elders. On the other hand, elders (as we have seen) were rulers and overseers; and we find the apostle speaking of the ministry, to which he and the presbytery had ordained Timothy, as a gift given to Timothy “by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the PRESBYTERY” (1 Tim. iv. 14)—language which the apostle would scarcely have used, if the presbytery were in *all* cases, and under *all* circumstances, incompetent alone to ordain. The *principle*, which I should deduce from these intimations is, that the authority to appoint ministers is *not a distinct and separate commission*, but an *authority incident to the office* of those ministers, who have *supreme* rule either (as the apostles had) over the whole church,¹ or over an independent church;² an authority which such rulers may exercise either personally, or by others whom they may commission to exercise it. On this principle we see at once how it was, that, while Paul sometimes ordained elders himself in conjunction with Barnabas, and at other times left an evangelist in a city, or sent an evangelist to an island, with a commission to regu-

¹ “That” (writes the apostle Paul) “which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” (2 Cor. xi. 28.)

² Of course, by “independent church,” I do not mean exclusively, or even principally, an independent *congregation*: but a church, whether local or particular (see ch. i.) not dependent upon any other church.

late churches for a season, and ordain in them elders, and while we find the presbytery joining with him in ordaining an evangelist, we have, in scripture, no instance of elders ordaining without the concurrence of an apostle. The elders, at that time, were rulers in their respective churches, but rulers *subordinate* to the apostles, or to one of the apostles, even where there was no bishop over them. But, after the death of the apostles, there remained no earthly ruler over the universal church. The evangelists had only temporary authority, first over one church, and then over another church committed to their charge by an apostle. The bishops had authority each only over his own church, and that authority was supreme: but, when a church had no bishop,¹ its elders had no superior; and consequently, they (or rather the presbytery) had in that church supreme rule, to which (according to the principle deduced) authority to appoint ministers was incident. The principle, I conceive, leads us to the conclusion, that, after the death of all the apostles, the presbytery of each episcopal church were, on the death of their bishop, competent (as supreme rulers for the time being of that church) to choose a successor, and to set him apart for his office by imposition of hands. The principle also, in the case of several episcopal churches being (as in the

¹ There is no evidence in Scripture, that, before the apostles ceased to govern the churches, there was established in *each* church a bishop over the elders: but this will further be examined in the following chapter. Even in an episcopal church the case supposed in the text would arise on the bishop's death.

present day) federally united, admits of each bishop being, in respect of its application, considered as supreme ruler of his own church; and it admits of the presbytery of each church being, in respect of the appointment of its bishop, subjected to regulations and restrictions, and not considered (while without a bishop) as supreme rulers of their own church, independently of the bishops of the other churches so united with it.

Hitherto the appointment of ministers has been considered as *one act*, including both the choice and the ordination of the individual: and such, as we have seen, it was generally¹ in the time of the apostles; though Timothy *seems* to have been chosen by St. Paul, and ordained by both him and the presbytery. But the ordination of a minister has, in later times, been considered as something distinct from the choice, particularly in respect of the appointment of bishops: and so much has (especially of late) been written on ordination and its effects, that it seems necessary to consider it more specifically and distinctly.

The minister of the gospel is a servant of Christ, an ambassador of God; and, as such, he receives his authority from God himself. The gospel is a message from God; and from him only can the minister of Christ receive the "ministry of reconciliation." Our Lord himself declared: "He that entereth not by the

¹ The appointment of the Seven is not an exception; the office to which they were appointed being that of treasurer or almoner of a special fund. See *antè* ch. v.

door into the sheepfold is a thief and a robber.” And—“I am the door of the sheep.” (John x. 1, 2, 7.) The same principle was implied in the injunction given by our Lord to his apostles—“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that HE will send forth labourers into his harvest.” (Matt. ix. 38). It was also implied in the language of the apostle Paul, when he addressed the elders of Ephesus (whom probably he had himself ordained) as those whom “THE HOLY GHOST” had “made” “overseers” over the flock (Acts xx. 28). And the same apostle declares, that “God hath set” “in the church,” not only “apostles” and “prophets,” but “teachers” (1 Cor. xii. 28): that Christ “gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” (Eph. iv. 11.)—*He gave the pastors and teachers as he gave the apostles.* The office of man, therefore, is not to *give* the ministry of reconciliation; but to set apart him who is believed to have *already received* it. The office of an ecclesiastical ruler, in ordaining another to the ministry of a deacon or of an elder, is first to inquire and examine with all diligence, whether the candidate is a fit person for that ministry, whether it may reasonably be concluded that he is called thereto by the Holy Ghost; and, if satisfied on these points, then, secondly, to set him apart thereto by imposition of hands, and with prayer that he may be filled with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit needful for the due performance of his ministry. Such previous investigation is in this case the duty of the ecclesiastical ruler, ac-

according to St. Paul's directions to Timothy, " Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins. . . . Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. Likewise the good works of *some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid " (1 Tim. v. 22, 24, 25)—some men's characters are well known; but the characters of others are hidden, yet capable of being ascertained on diligent inquiry.

Ordination, therefore, to the office of deacon or elder, is a recognition (so far as fallible man can recognize) that the individual ordained has been called by the Holy Spirit to take upon himself the office; and a solemn setting of him apart to it with prayer and imposition of hands. Such an ordination, involving such a recognition, the ecclesiastical ruler must have an absolute and uncontrolled discretion to *withhold*; though, in respect of *conferring* it, the church over which he presides may restrict him by prescribed rules and conditions. But, in regard to the appointment of an elder to the office of a diocesan bishop, the case is somewhat different. The elder has already been recognized by the competent authority as a minister of Christ. He is already both pastor and overseer. When appointed to the office of bishop, he is still only pastor and overseer; but with this difference, that he now is pastor and overseer over elders as well as their flocks, and has also authority to ordain ministers which an elder (*while there is a bishop over him*) has not.

When, therefore, an elder is appointed bishop over his co-elders, there is no evident *necessity* that he should be again ordained, nor have we found that it is *required* in scripture : but it is obviously *proper*, that he should be set apart to his new office with imposition of hands and prayer, not indeed as being inwardly called by the Holy Spirit to the office, but as having been duly chosen or nominated thereto according to the order of the church. Hence we may distinguish between the ordination of an individual to be deacon or elder, and the ordination (or as it is usually and more properly called the consecration) of an elder to the office of bishop. In the former, a divine call to the ministry, in the latter a human appointment only to the office, is recognized ; while in both the individual is solemnly set apart to the work. In the latter case, it is not necessary that the selection and consecration should belong to the same individual or individuals.

Ordination to the office of deacon or elder may *in some measure* serve the purpose of credentials to the minister. Our Lord himself gave both to his apostles and to the seventy, not only the ministry of the word, but credentials of that ministry, power to work miracles. The minister has now no *such* credentials. Yet, when the rulers of the church solemnly set him apart for the ministry, they testify their belief that God has called him to the office ; and the minister so ordained will be received as such, by other churches in communion with that church by whose ruler or rulers he has been ordained.

And here—since the only true call to the ministry is by God himself, and ordination does not confer, but recognizes as already conferred, “the ministry of reconciliation”—a question arises how far ordination is essential to the lawful exercise of the ministry: but some other subjects must be considered before this question can be fully examined.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE QUESTION AS TO THE THREEFOLD MINISTRY AND ORDINATION FURTHER CONSIDERED.

WE have proceeded thus far in our investigation. We have traced in the time of the apostles, the introduction of the three classes of ministers attached to settled churches, viz. bishops, elders, and deacons; but they were introduced gradually; nor can we find that within that period they were universally introduced. At first we find only two of these classes—the elders who are sometimes called pastors, and sometimes overseers¹ or bishops—and the deacons:² and so (as far as appears in scripture) things continued, until after St. Paul's first imprisonment. During this period the apostles exercised a general superintending authority

¹ See Acts xx. 17—29.

² In the epistle to the Philippians, written (see i. 7, 13; ii. 24) during the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, he addresses the "Bishops and Deacons" (i. 1), mentioning no other order of ministers.

over all the churches; and St. Paul especially over those of the Gentiles. During this period the churches settled in different cities appear to have been independent of each other, but externally united, in so far as they were under the rule of the apostles, or one of them: and we find no ordination of a minister to his office mentioned without an apostle joining in the imposition of hands.

As to the next period, the interval between St. Paul's first and second imprisonment at Rome, our scriptural information is derived exclusively from the epistle to Titus and the two epistles to Timothy. To those evangelists, whom the apostle commissioned to exercise for a time, an authority episcopal in its nature over certain local churches—Titus over the churches in Crete, Timothy over the church at Ephesus—he gave directions respecting elders, whom he calls interchangeably elders and bishops (or overseers), and respecting deacons. But we find no mention made in scripture of elders or bishops either being authorized to ordain or exercising (without the concurrence of an apostle) such authority,¹ while authority to ordain was clearly given by the apostle both to Titus and to Timothy. This commission, given to Titus and Timothy respectively, was a further step towards diocesan episcopacy: but it was not diocesan episcopacy in the modern sense of the word.

At a later period, however, we find episcopacy intro-

¹ The apostle Paul concurred in the laying on of the hands of the presbytery mentioned in 1 Tim. iv. 14. (See the preceding chapter.)

duced into *each of the seven churches of Asia Minor* : but neither then, nor at any later period can we trace in scripture its introduction into other churches. Our scriptural information respecting the episcopacy of these seven churches, is derived exclusively from the Apocalypse :¹ and it is derived incidentally only, and by inference from the epistles which the apostle John was directed to write to the respective “angels” of those churches. These *angels*, as we have inferred² from the directions given to them, were the bishops or presiding and ruling ministers, each of his own church, subordinate still to the apostle, but independent (as far as appears) of each other. Nothing, however, is said in the Apocalypse of ordination : nor does it contain any intimation how or by whom the “angels” had been appointed ; or by what means, on a vacancy in the office, a successor was to be appointed.

We may therefore conclude, first, that a church, having a threefold ministry of bishop, elders and deacons, is conformable to the plan ultimately introduced with apostolic sanction into the churches of Asia Minor, and consequently consistent with the will of God : secondly, that such a form of church government is the *best, where the circumstances of the church do not essentially differ from those of the seven Asiatic churches* : and thirdly, that a church possessing that form of government ought not to depart from it without clear and strong grounds, such as an obvious necessity for the preservation of the true faith.

¹ Rev. i. ii. iii. See antè, ch. vi.

² Antè ch. vi.

But we cannot conclude from any practice of the apostolic church as recorded in the New Testament, either first that a church sound in apostolic doctrine, but wanting the threefold ministry, is not a true church of Christ: or secondly, that a church having both apostolic doctrine and a threefold ministry, but whose bishops cannot trace back an uninterrupted succession to an apostle, is not a true church of Christ.

Some, however, insist on a threefold ministry of bishop, elders, and deacons, as essential to a duly constituted church. They contend that in the seven Apocalyptic churches the apostles have left us this model; and that we are bound to imitate the example, which an apostle has set us as superintendent of the Christian church.¹ At the same time it is admitted, that the details of this model are not fully sketched out in scripture; and that for some of those details we must have recourse to uninspired writers. But this is to carry much too far the obligation of apostolic example. Where an apostle's conduct (as a ruler of the church) is expressly set forth as an example or the principle of it is laid down in scripture, we are bound to imitate that conduct, in the one case, universally—in the other, so far as the principle will carry us. Even where we are neither expressly directed to such conduct as an example, nor informed of the principle on which the apostle acted, it is the part of wisdom to follow the example under circumstances substantially the same. And, if we can trace the same line of conduct univer-

¹ See Hey's Authority of a Threefold Ministry.

sally pursued by the apostles under a great variety of circumstances, we may reasonably infer that it is set forth *generally* (I do not say *universally*) as our example. But we do not find in scripture that episcopal government or the threefold ministry was universally established by the apostles; nor, where we find it established, do we find the principle explained, or the circumstances stated which led to its introduction. Apostolic example, besides, to be binding must be so far detailed in scripture that we may be able to follow it without instruction from other sources. But we are not informed how the “angels” of the seven churches were appointed: nor is any instance recorded in scripture of a vacancy occurring in the office. Let those who contend that the example of the apostles in this matter is our rule, shew us the rule. What was the course to be adopted on the first vacancy, which, after the death of the last surviving apostle, occurred in the office of “angel” of one of the apocalyptic churches? To whom did the choice of a successor belong? Was it essential that such successor, if already an elder, should be set apart to his new office by imposition of hands? and, if this ordination was essential, by whom was it to be conferred? by the elders of the church? Or, could it be conferred only by episcopal hands? And, if episcopal ordination was essential to constitute an “angel” of the church, to which bishop or bishops did such ordination appertain? Might the elders of the vacant church elect a new bishop, and then *select* one of the neighbouring bishops, and apply to him to

lay hands on the bishop elect? Would the rejection by such bishop of the individual, whom they had chosen, be conclusive against their choice? or might they present him first to one bishop and then to another? These are questions to which no answer can be deduced from apostolic example or apostolic precept as recorded in scripture: and we have consequently no apostolic example to guide us as to the *mode* of appointing bishops—none that can be binding on the church. Should we have been left without either example or precept as to these particulars, if episcopacy had been essential to the constitution of a church?

Others insist that no one but a bishop deriving his authority from an apostle, through an unbroken succession of bishops, can confer valid ordination to the ministry. They consider ordination as the conferring of a divine commission. No one, they say, can be an *ambassador* for Christ, to no one is committed *the ministry of reconciliation*, unless he has received his commission from God. No one, now that miracles have ceased, has received his commission from God, unless it has been transmitted to him in regular unbroken succession from the apostles, to whom alone our Lord gave both the commission and also authority to transmit it to others. On some the apostles conferred the commission to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, but without authority to transmit this commission: on others they conferred the authority both to minister and to transmit this power of ordina-

tion in perpetuity. Those who received the commission only were called elders, and sometimes in the apostolic age overseers or bishops : those on whom the apostles conferred the further authority of ordination were called first *angels*, and afterwards *bishops*—the latter word not being, after the time of the apostles, applied to elders. This succession of bishops has been continued to the present day : and no one has received a commission¹ to preach the word or administer the sacraments, who has not been ordained by a bishop to whom the power of ordination has been transmitted in unbroken succession from the apostles. This is what is *properly* called the doctrine of *apostolical succession* : though many talk of apostolical succession who attach to the phrase no such exclusive meaning. The legitimate deduction from this doctrine is that the bishop *makes* the clergy God's ministers :² that no one not so ordained really administers the sacrament of

¹ "The Lord JESUS CHRIST gave His Spirit to His Apostles : they in turn laid their hands on those who should succeed them ; and these again on others ; and so the sacred gift has been handed down to our present Bishops, who have appointed us [presbyters] as their assistants, and in some sense representatives." (Tracts for the Times, No. 1, p. 2.)

"He" [the bishop] "could not give what he had never received. It is plain then that he but *transmits* ; and that the Christian Ministry is a *succession*. And if we trace back the power of ordination from hand to hand, of course we shall come to the Apostles at last . . . we must necessarily consider none to be *really* ordained, who have not *thus* been ordained." (Ib. p. 3.)

² "It is the Bishop who makes us Clergymen God's Ministers. He is CHRIST's instrument ; and he visibly chooses those whom CHRIST chooses invisibly, to serve in the word and sacraments of the church." (Tracts for the Times, No. 10, p. 3.)

baptism or the Lord's supper, though he may go regularly through the form prescribed by our Lord:¹

The *phraseology* of "apostolical succession" is nowhere to be found in scripture, nor any equivalent phraseology, and the argument, on which this doctrine is founded, rests on the common sophism of using the same word in two different senses. A *commission* sometimes means the *authority* committed, sometimes the *credentials* by which that authority is vouched. The ministerial authority (as has been shown) is given by God alone: the credentials, and the credentials only, and that in a limited sense, may be given by man; and it is only by confounding the credentials with the authority under the ambiguous word "commission," that a semblance of argument in favour of the doctrine of apostolical succession is adduced. If the minister's authority is immediately derived from God, calling him to the ministry by the Holy Spirit, strong reasons may still be assigned to show that (under ordinary circumstances) the individual, who believes

¹ "A person not commissioned from the bishop may use the words of Baptism, and sprinkle or bathe with water, *on earth*; but there is no promise from Christ, that such a man shall admit souls to the *Kingdom of Heaven*. A person not commissioned may break bread, and pour out wine, and pretend to give the LORD'S Supper, but it can afford no comfort to any to receive it at his hands, because there is no warrant from CHRIST to lead communicants to suppose that while he does so here *on earth*, they will be partakers in the SAVIOUR'S *heavenly* Body and Blood. And as for the person himself, who takes upon himself without warrant to minister in holy things, he is all the while treading in the footsteps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whose awful punishment you read of in the book of Numbers. (Compare Numb. xvi. with Jude 11.)" (Tracts for the Times, No. 35, p. 3.)

himself to be so called, should wait to have his call authenticated by those who have competent authority to do so; but it does not follow, that such authority must be derived in regular succession from the apostles: and, if we carry with us this distinction between the minister's authority and his credentials, we shall at once see, that all the texts usually cited in support of the doctrine of apostolical succession, utterly fail in this object.

The principal texts usually cited are the following—

1. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."¹ (1 Cor. iv. 1.) God "has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, . . . and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ." (2 Cor. v. 18—20.) These passages relate primarily to the apostles; and doubtless they also describe the office of the Christian minister. But it is not easy to see how they can furnish an argument in favour of apostolical succession; on the contrary, they lead to the conclusion, that the "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" receive, not from man, but from God himself, their commission, "the ministry—the word of reconciliation."

¹ It has been shown (antè ch. vi.) that it cannot be deduced from this passage, that to the apostles and those deriving authority from them a commission to administer the Lord's Supper is exclusively given.

2. "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15.) The legitimate conclusion is, that the preacher must be sent—but by whom? On this question the passage is silent. What bearing has this text on apostolical succession?

3. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 18--20.) This command and the promise annexed have been already examined.¹ The command includes a commission to make a provision for perpetuating the ministry in the church; but it prescribes no particular scheme for that purpose: and, if the apostles, in the execution of this commission, had appointed—which they did not—popular election (independent of ministerial controul) for the choice of ministers, such an appointment would not have been inconsistent with the command—so destitute is the passage *in itself* of sanction for the doctrine of apostolical succession—in *itself*: for *if* the apostles had established apostolical succession as the rule of the church, that rule would undoubtedly have been binding. The question is, whether they *did* establish such rule. The passage under consideration proves the *authority* of the apostles to establish, but neither *itself*

¹ See ch. ii.

establishes, nor proves that *they* established, the principle or rule of apostolical succession. The command is general and unlimited: the promise is annexed to the command, and belongs to all who obey it—to all, who, being sent forth by our Lord, being moved by the Holy Spirit, and acting in conformity to apostolic discipline, preach the same gospel which the apostles preached, and baptize with the same baptism with which they baptized.¹

¹ Surely it is both strange and sad to find such a text not only itself narrowed, but used to cut down and pare away the blessed promises of the gospel—"Our Saviour in His prayer before His sufferings, in ch. xvii. of St. John, plainly had an eye to the command he purposed to give them, when he was going to be taken out of their sight: which command we read in the last three verses of St. Matthew. The prayer was 'not for the Apostles alone, but for all who should believe on Him THROUGH THEIR WORD: that they all might be one.' For whom was this prayer offered? Not for all who any how should believe in CHRIST, but 'for them who should believe on Him through the word of the Apostles:' i. e. for the very same persons described in the other text: 'Go ye and teach (or, as it is in the margin, make Disciples, or Christians, of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST.' Those whom he had before prayed for, he here in effect orders to be taught or made Disciples, by persons having Apostolical authority. But these very same Disciples are to be one and all baptized. For our Lord's words are quite express: 'Make Christians of them by baptizing them;' so that if we are to go by these words, it is quite plain that persons unbaptized cannot properly be called Christians; and if we compare the same words with the other text, it seems very doubtful whether such persons are included in the meaning of our SAVIOUR's gracious intercession." (Tracts for the Times, No. 40, p. 9.) I have given the passage at length, with the capital letters as they are printed in the original, lest I should have misunderstood, or seem to have misunderstood, the writer's meaning. And first I would ask, on what ground he represents our Lord's words as being: "Make Christians of them BY baptizing them?" The original is:—*μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τῆ Πατρὸς καὶ τῆ Ὑιῆς καὶ τῆ Ἁγίας*

4. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose

Πνεύματος· Διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν—literally—"Make all nations disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." There is no more reason for foisting in the word "by," than there would be for introducing it in such passages as the following—"Jesus went about all the cities and villages, [by] teaching in their synagogues." (Matt. ix. 35.) And, if there were any ground for inserting the word, then the words of our Lord would be, not—"Make disciples of them by baptizing them;" but—"Make disciples of them by baptizing them and by teaching them." But let this pass. If I understand the drift of the writer, it is this: That our Lord's gracious intercession was *exclusively* for those who should "be taught or made disciples by persons having apostolical authority;" and that "it seems very doubtful whether" persons unbaptized "are included in the meaning of our Saviour's gracious intercession;" and (may I not add?) that baptism is invalid unless administered by one having apostolical authority; and that no one (see Tract, No. 12) has apostolical authority, unless he be episcopally ordained. Now I would ask respecting the natives of the South Sea Islands, who have been taught and baptized by persons not episcopally ordained, and have through their instrumentality been brought to believe in Christ—are they, or are they not, "included in the meaning of our Saviour's gracious intercession?" Are they to be excluded from the promise: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life?" (John iii. 36.) Again—If an individual, reading the Bible, is led to believe on the Son of God without any ministerial teaching—and such things have happened—will the writer of the Tract venture to say, that such a believer "hath" *not* "everlasting life;" that he is not "included in the meaning of our Saviour's gracious intercession;" that "it is doubtful" whether he be included therein, unless he be baptized by a minister episcopally ordained, though he have no opportunity of obtaining such baptism? The terms—"through their word"—are obviously misinterpreted. The word of the apostles was, and derives its efficacy from being, the word of God (1 Thess. ii. 13): and it is impossible that any one "any how should believe in Christ" except through the word of God, which is the incorruptible seed of the new birth (1 Pet. i. 23). The Scriptures of the New Testament are at once the word of God, and the

soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.” (John xx. 22, 23.) This passage also has already been examined ; and it has been shown to have been addressed to the apostles *exclusively*, and to belong in its primary, and full, and proper meaning to the apostles alone ; and it is only in a qualified sense that it can be applied to any other ministers of the gospel. To other ministers it belongs so far only as they preach the same doctrine which the apostles preached.¹ It belongs to them, therefore, as deriving, not their commission, but their doctrine, from the apostles.

5. “ No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.” (Heb. v. 4.) This passage could scarcely mislead any one, except as it is in the Tracts for the Times separated from the context, and cited *immediately after* two other passages each from a different epistle, and without any reference to the epistles from which they are taken. “ How shall they preach, except they be sent ? ” “ Let a man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the mysteries of God.” “ No man taketh

word of the apostles : and it is strange indeed, that a learned member of a learned university should implicitly restrict the terms “ their word ” to the word *spoken* by the apostles or by ministers authorized by them, and exclude the written word of the same apostles—the word of God recorded by them. I have been led to extend this note to (perhaps) a disproportionate length, from a conviction of the importance of showing, how Scripture may be distorted and misrepresented, and made to bend to a particular system—and how it has been distorted and misrepresented to make it support the doctrine of Apostolical Succession as enunciated in the Tracts for the Times—and the mischief of such distorting and misrepresenting.

¹ See *antè*, ch. ii.

this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”¹ Reading these passages in succession, who would not (unless he either recollected the context or searched the passages out in his Bible) suppose, that in the last of them the apostle was speaking of “the honour” of the Christian ministry? But what do we learn from the context? Of what honour was the apostle writing to the Hebrews? Of honour belonging, under the Mosaic law, to the “High Priest,” “who ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.” (Heb. v. 1—3.) The text has no application, nor does the apostle apply it, to the Christian ministry: for (as has already been shown,² and as the apostle argues at great length in this very epistle) there is, under the Christian dispensation, no minister “to offer” sacrifice “for sins,” either for his own sins or for those of the people. But suppose it to be applied by analogy—there is no analogy (and much of misinterpretation has arisen from fancying an analogy) between the priesthood of Aaron and his descendants and the Christian ministry—suppose the passage applied by analogy to the Christian ministry, what can be deduced from it? That no one ought to take upon himself the Christian ministry, “but he that is called

¹ So the three passages are printed in succession in Tract, No. 4, p. 5. The inverted commas, indeed, would show to an *attentive* reader that they did not, in Scripture, stand in *immediate juxtaposition*; but there is nothing to point out the fact, that they are taken and brought together from three different epistles, viz., Rom. x. 15, and 1 Cor. iv. 1, and Heb. v. 4; nor is the reader enabled by a reference to turn to any one of the passages and see the context.

² See *antè*, ch. vi.

of God.” Who denies that position? The apostle adds, “as *was* Aaron,” i. e. by God himself, *not by succession*: and immediately proceeds—“So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.” (Heb. v. 5.) The apostle is evidently speaking of the high priesthood of Aaron the type, and the high priesthood of Christ the antitype; and of a direct call by God in both cases: not of the priesthood of the sons of Aaron, and their call thereto by natural descent, or of the Christian ministry which has nothing analogous to that descent.

6. “This do in remembrance of me.” (1 Cor. xi. 24.) This text has already been examined in considering the administration of the Lord’s supper: and it has been shown,¹ that, the command being a command to partake of the bread and wine as well as to administer them, nothing can be inferred from it as to the individuals by whom it was to be administered.

7. “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, and of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” (Heb. vi. 1, 2.) It is questionable,² whether, in this passage, the “laying on

¹ Antè, ch. ii. See also antè, ch. vi.

² Some expositors explain the whole passage as referring to instructions contained in the Old Testament (see Scott *in loc.*); and there seems considerable ground for this interpretation.

of hands" has any connection with ordination : but, if the apostle did in this passage refer to ordination, we learn from it nothing as to the individuals authorized to ordain, still less as to the doctrine of apostolical succession.

These passages, and 2 Tim. ii. 2. (which has been already shown not to refer to the ordination of ministers), are, as far as I am aware, the principal passages cited in support of the doctrine of apostolical succession. Others there may be of a similar description. They will all be found, either (like Heb. v. 4) not to refer to the Christian ministry; or (like other passages which have just been examined) to refer to Christian ministers, without any mention of ordination or succession.

I have, for several reasons, entered thus fully into the examination of the principal passages cited in support of the doctrine of apostolical succession.

In the first place, it is important to remark to what a lamentable perversion of scripture, the notion of apostolical succession, as propounded in the Tracts for the Times, has led. Sometimes authority given to the apostles exclusively, promises made to them exclusively, have—without the slightest scriptural warrant, and (in some instances) in violation of the plainest rules of interpretation, and in opposition to other clear passages in scripture—been quoted as belonging also to those, whom the person quoting them (not the scripture) designates as "the successors of the apostles." And thus authority and privileges are claimed for the

clergy of the present day, which belonged only to the apostles. At other times a promise made to the apostles in perpetuity, and expressed in terms ample enough to include all ministers who preach the truth and administer baptism according to our Lord's institution, is restricted to the apostles, and to those who can by episcopal ordination trace back their commission to them. And thus churches are unchurched, in which the doctrine of the apostles is faithfully taught, and the sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution. At other times a promise, clearly intended for all who believe in Jesus, is limited to those who have been taught and baptized by men deriving authority by succession from the apostles. And thus true members of Christ's spiritual body are cut off from the comfort, and consolation, and encouragement of promises which the Great Head of the church intended for them. Surely these are bitter fruits, which should make us *at least* distrust the root out of which they grow.

In the next place the doctrine of apostolical succession (in the sense now under discussion) makes men ministers of God, who have no real claim to the title. A man, who disbelieves or explains away the mysteries of the gospel, may apply to the bishop for ordination; may subscribe articles directly opposed to his own opinions; may declare in the presence of God, that he believes himself to be "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take that office upon" him—not knowing or believing that there is any Holy Ghost: and the bishop

deceived by his prevarication, may ordain him.¹ According to the doctrine of apostolical succession, the bishop by imposition of hands *makes* him God's *minister* !² Surely this is a strange perversion of ideas ! The bishop, it is true, deceived by the man's prevarication, gives him what may *purport to be credentials* of his being God's minister : but he gives him nothing more. The individual may afterwards repent of his sin ; and may be led by the Holy Spirit to believe, to love, and zealously to preach those blessed truths of the gospel, which at the time of his ordination he disbelieved. Then—and not before—he receives his ministerial commission, his ministerial authority. Then he is made—not by the bishop, but—by God himself, a minister of God, an ambassador for Christ. Till then he is in a situation similar to that of an individual, who, forging the royal signature, should, by means thereof, obtain from the keeper of the great seal, letters patent appointing him to an office which the sovereign had never conferred upon him. Such an one

¹ This is not an imaginary case—it *has* happened, and *may* happen again. See Scott's Force of Truth, and the Life of the Rev. Thomas Scott, by the Rev. J. Scott.

² “ It is,” says a writer in the Tracts for the Times, “ the bishop who makes us clergymen God's ministers. He is CHRIST's instrument ; and he visibly chooses those whom CHRIST chooses invisibly, to serve in the Word and Sacraments of the Church.” (Tracts for the Times, No. 10, p. 3.) Is it meant to say, that the bishop is in this respect infallible ? that he never ordains any one whom Christ has not chosen invisibly ? If not, what is the effect of ordination, when in this respect the bishop errs ? Does he *then* make the man God's minister ? The passage can scarcely mean any thing but that the bishop *makes* all whom he ordains *God's ministers*.

would have the seeming credentials, the patent, but not the office.

3rdly. The scriptural authority belonging to the true ministers of Christ is in danger of being disregarded, when attempts are made to carry it beyond its scriptural limits.

The question now recurs, of which the consideration was postponed—How far is ordination essential to the lawful exercise of the ministry? In default of *express* scriptural authority on this question—for the two passages¹ usually cited in support of an affirmative answer, have been shown to have no reference to the ordination of Christian ministers—we have traced the example of the apostles: and we have found,² that, in their time, imposition of hands became the recognized mode of appointing elders and deacons; that no such appointment is in scripture recorded to have been made, except by or with the concurrence of an apostle, or an individual specially authorized by him; and that (nevertheless) the ordination of Timothy by the laying on of the hands both of the apostle and of the presbytery, is spoken of in terms which lead to the conclusion that power to ordain is incident to the office of supreme ecclesiastical ruler. It is, therefore, from apostolic practice, obvious that, *in ordinary circumstances*, an individual, believing himself to be called of God to minister in the word and doctrine, should apply for ordination before he takes the office upon himself. Still the question thus far remains unde-

¹ Heb. v. 4, and Rom. x. 15.

² See *antè*, ch. vii.

cided—Is ordination, *in every case, and under all circumstances*, essential to the lawful exercise of the Christian ministry? There are some passages in the New Testament, which may throw light on this question.

The apostles, as we have seen, were invested by our Lord both with a general legislative power over the church, and with authority to make provision for the preaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments, throughout the world, and to the end of time. By virtue of this authority, they might have laid down a rule, prohibiting any disciple from taking upon himself the ministry, without first being ordained thereto. But we find no such rule recorded: while we find, on one occasion, our Lord giving to his apostles instructions, from which we should anticipate that they would, in the exercise of the authority entrusted to them, abstain from laying down such a prohibition, as being contrary to their Lord's will.

The occasion, to which I refer, is when the apostle John told our Lord: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part." (Mark ix. 38—40.) From the parallel passage in St. Luke (ix. 49, 50) it appears, that this incident occurred in the interval between the mission of the twelve apostles and the mission of the seventy disciples. There is no intimation, that, at that period,

our Lord had, by external designation, conferred supernatural powers on any but the twelve apostles : still less, that he had, *by external designation*, appointed the individual to the office of an exorcist : and, had the individual been so appointed, it is utterly improbable, either that the apostles would have forbidden him, or that Jesus would, in his reply to John, have omitted to notice the circumstance. Yet we cannot doubt that the exorcist was inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to cast out devils. Otherwise our Lord would not even indirectly have sanctioned his proceedings, and the exorcist would probably have met with a disaster similar to that which befell the sons of Sceva, when the evil spirit, whom without authority they had adjured in the name of Jesus, “ answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know ; but who are ye ? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.” (Acts xix. 13—16.) On this passage it is obvious to remark, that the authority of the exorcist mentioned in the gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke was vouched by the obedience of the evil spirits to the commands which he pronounced in the name of Jesus : and that, in this respect, his case is distinguished both from that of the sons of Sceva, and from the case of an individual preaching the gospel without having either supernatural gifts or external designation. While, therefore, our Lord’s injunction on this occasion—“ Forbid him not”—and the reason assigned

by him for the injunction, rebuked the exclusive disposition manifested by his apostles, and should caution us against condemning as an intruder any individual who may preach the truth as revealed in scripture, and to whose ministry the Holy Spirit may set his seal by the conversion of sinners; yet he, who, without either the sanction of external designation, or the voucher of supernatural gifts, takes upon himself the ministry of the word, cannot, when he first takes it upon himself, be certain that his ministry *will* receive the attestation of the Holy Spirit. He may have mistaken the suggestions of his own imagination for the call of the Holy Spirit.

Besides these intimations of our Lord's will, there are passages in the Acts of the Apostles and in the apostolic epistles bearing on the question.

On the martyrdom of Stephen "there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were ALL scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, EXCEPT THE APOSTLES." And "THEY THAT WERE SCATTERED abroad, went every where PREACHING the word." (Acts viii. 1, 4.) And "THEY WHICH WERE SCATTERED ABROAD upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, PREACHING the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, PREACHING the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a

great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." (Acts xi. 19—21.) The persons thus scattered were the general body of disciples belonging to the church at Jerusalem,¹ people as well as ministers—the apostles being alone specially excepted—yet they preached² the gospel; and "the hand of the Lord was with them," converting many by their ministry, and thereby stamp-

¹ "There was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles" (Acts viii. 1). It seems to me difficult to limit, as some (see Scott *in loc.*) have limited, this scattering to the disciples not habitually residing at Jerusalem, but assembled there at the Feast of Pentecost, and retained there by the events of that day. But whether so limited or not, the persons so scattered comprised others besides ordained ministers.

² The words, indeed, in both passages, translated *preach*, are not *κηρύσσειν*, but either *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, or *λαλεῖν*: and it has been contended that they mean, not public, ministerial, authorised preaching, but private teaching. The etymology of the words *κηρύσσειν* and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* (which latter word is used both in the first passage and the second time that the word *preach* occurs in the second passage) points out no such distinction between them; the one being derived from *κήρυξ* a herald, the other from *ἄγγελος* a messenger. Nor is the distinction warranted by the usage of the sacred writers. The latter is the word used by the angel in announcing our Lord's birth to the shepherds (Luke ii. 10). It is the word used by St. Paul, when speaking of the mission, on which our Lord had sent him—"not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (1 Cor. i. 17)—"It pleased God . . . to reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen" (Gal. i. 15, 16). The two words *κηρύσσειν* and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* are used interchangeably by St. Luke, when he relates that our Lord sent forth the twelve *κηρύσσειν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ* and afterwards records that they went forth *εὐαγγελιζόμενοι* (Luke ix. 2, 6); and the words *τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν* and *τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσειν* and *τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλειν* are used interchangeably by St. Paul. (Philip. i. 14—16.) Any one therefore of these expressions *may* mean public preaching: though the two, used respecting the men scattered by the persecution, do not *necessarily* mean so.

ing it with his approbation. This passage, however, must not be pressed too far. These men preached to *unbelievers*; and, when “a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord,” “then” (the inspired historian proceeds) “tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.” (Acts xi. 22.) The lesson to be derived from this passage is this—Christians, who by the providence of God are cast among *unbelievers*, may, though unordained, make known to them, privately or publicly, according to circumstances, the gospel; but, when a church begins through their ministry to be formed, they should send for pastors and teachers to the church from which they came.

Further light will be thrown on this subject, if we examine what is recorded of Apollos. “A certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.” (Acts xviii. 24—26.) Hitherto he had not received Christian baptism—yet he “was instructed in the way of the Lord, . . . and taught the things of the Lord.” He taught them *publicly*: for “he began to speak in the SYNAGOGUE: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly,” (ib. 26.)—taught him (no doubt) the meaning of

Christian baptism, and the duty of receiving it. Hitherto his example can furnish no precedent. He was not even a baptized disciple—his knowledge, and consequently his teaching, was imperfect—his preaching was confined to the Jews and their synagogue. But Aquila and Priscilla “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him : who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace : for he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that PUBLICLY*, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.” (ib. 27, 28.) We have it here distinctly recorded, and with implied approbation, that Apollos preached Christ *publicly*. Had he been ordained? When? By whom? He was not ordained before his arrival at Ephesus, for he then knew only John’s baptism; when he arrived at Ephesus, Paul had left that city. We have no other intimation of any apostle having visited Ephesus before Apollos went to Corinth; and the only instruction in Christian doctrine, which Apollos is recorded to have received at Ephesus, was from Aquila and Priscilla. He went thence to Corinth with letters of introduction from the *brethren*: but we have no hint of his having gone with authority from an apostle. At Corinth he argued “publicly” with the Jews, and “mightily convinced” them; and thus he “helped them much which had believed through grace.” (ib. 27, 28.)

Thus far we trace Apollos preaching Christ publicly to the Jews, without having been (as far as we can

discover) ordained to the ministry. At a subsequent period¹ the apostle recognizes Apollos as a minister, who, like himself, had laboured in the church at Corinth. "Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 5, 6.) Apollos appears to have travelled much; and he *may*, during the interval of his going from Ephesus to Corinth and the date of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, have met with an apostle, and been ordained by him. We cannot conclude that he was not ordained, from the silence of St. Luke in the Acts, for even the baptism of Apollos is not recorded.

The case, therefore, of Apollos is that of an unordained individual preaching, and with success, to unbelievers; but we have no sufficient ground for concluding, that he ministered in a settled Christian church without having been first ordained.

In these two instances—first, of those who were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen; and secondly, of Apollos—individuals, who (as far as we can discover) had not been ordained to the ministry, preached the word either principally or exclusively to unbelievers: and that these individuals had not unlawfully taken upon themselves this office, is manifest from the terms in which the sacred histo-

¹ See Paley's *Horæ Paul.* ch. iii. No. 2, and Tate's *Continuous History of St. Paul*, p. 61—as to the first epistle to the Corinthians being of a later date.

rian records the fact, and the success with which their labours were blessed.

It may then, I think, be concluded that, in the time of the apostles, individuals not ordained to the ministry did sometimes preach the word to *unbelievers*; and that, in so doing, they did not act unlawfully. It is not, however, clear that such individuals preached *publicly in settled Christian churches*: and, if they did occasionally so minister, it would not thence follow, that whosoever will may, without any external sanction, take upon himself the ministerial office. The general principles on which every society must be built, and the principles laid down in scripture, are alike opposed to such a notion.

That no society can be held together without government, without order, without some regulations allotting to its different members the posts which they are respectively to occupy, and the duties which (as regards the society) they are to perform, is a proposition too obvious to require either discussion or illustration. And, since in a Christian church all cannot rule nor can all teach, and since both for ruling and teaching are required knowledge and other qualifications not possessed by every one, it necessarily follows that this proposition is applicable to every Christian church; and the principles, on which the proposition rests, are so applied in scripture. The following passages are in point.

“ Let all things be done decently and in order ”
(1 Cor. xiv. 40). “ Obey them that have the rule

over you, and submit yourselves : for they watch for your souls" (Heb. xiii. 17). "As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office : so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom. xii. 4, 5). "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor. xii. 4—7). The apostle then enumerates various gifts of the Spirit, and concludes : "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body : so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free ; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body ; is it therefore not of the body ? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body ; is it therefore not of the body ? If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing ? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where *were* the body ? But now *are they* many mem-

bers, yet one body" (ib. 8—20). The application intended by the apostle is obvious. If all were teachers, where were the learners? If all were rulers, where were those who are to obey? The apostle has himself made the application. "*Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*" (ib. 29, 30.)

God appoints different individuals to different offices in the church: and he, who intrudes himself into an office to which God has not called him, either wilfully sins or grievously errs. How shall an individual, entering the ministry, avoid this error? The Holy Spirit calls an individual to the ministry by disposing him to seek the office from love to Christ and the souls of men; and by enduing him with qualifications suitable to the office. Of this disposition no one can finally judge but himself,¹ though an experienced Christian—especially if himself a minister—may greatly assist him in deciding the question. But the disposition is not alone a sufficient warrant for undertaking the office: he must also possess the necessary qualifications, or he is not (*at least as yet*) called to the office. And of the question, whether he be duly qualified for the office, he can seldom himself be a competent judge.

¹ St. Paul appeals to the converts among the Corinthians as "the seal" of his "apostleship" (1 Cor. ix. 2). So one, who has actually exercised the ministry, may, in some cases, point to those who have been converted under his ministry as evidence of his having been called to it by the Holy Spirit: but I am now speaking of the ground which an individual, *before he has exercised the ministry*, may have to conclude that he is called to it.

We are, therefore, both by the reason of the thing, and by the practice of the church in the time of the apostles, led to the *general principle*: that he who believes himself to be called to the work of the ministry, should (*under ordinary circumstances*) resort, before he takes the office upon himself, to those whom God in his providence has set over the church, for their sanction. I say, *under ordinary circumstances*, because the instances which have been noticed, show, that the general principle admits of exceptions, at least in respect of preaching the gospel among the heathen. But, under ordinary circumstances, the general principle is recognized in scripture as well as founded in reason: nor should any one rashly say, that he is bound to obey what he considers as the call of the Holy Spirit; he may mistake the call, and such a mistake would be a serious one.

Such is the principle on which the individual, who takes upon himself the office of a minister, should in ordinary cases seek ordination from the rulers of the church. But there is no scriptural authority for holding, that either the threefold ministry, or an unbroken succession from an apostle in the ordination of ministers, is necessary to constitute a church of Christ. The only essential characteristics of a true church, which can be deduced from scripture, are the holding fast of apostolic doctrine in its purity, the administration of the sacraments in conformity to our Lord's institution, and the faithful ministry of pastors set apart to teach and rule the flock.

But before I quit this subject of the ministry, I must shortly notice the opinion of those who reject altogether the setting apart, in any way, of individuals to the Christian ministry. This opinion is so opposed to the example of our Lord, who set apart first twelve apostles, and then seventy other disciples to preach the gospel; so opposed to the practice of the apostle Paul in ordaining elders as recorded in the book of Acts, and to the instructions given by the same apostle both to Timothy and Titus respecting the appointment of ministers; so opposed to the constitution of the apostolic churches, which were exhorted to obey their rulers: that it might seem to require no further discussion. But, as the opinion is not new, and has of late been revived and propagated with much earnestness, I will shortly notice the principal texts by which, I conceive, its advocates would attempt to support it.

(1.) Ye are “an holy priesthood” (1 Peter ii. 5). “Ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood” (ib. 9). He “hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father” (Rev. i. 6). These texts prove, that there is no order of men set apart in the Christian church from the other members to be priests (*ιερεῖς*) in the sacerdotal sense: they do *not* prove, that individuals are not to be solemnly set apart to the ministry. And St. Peter, in the same epistle from which the two first texts are taken, distinctly recognizes the office of an elder. “The elders” (he writes) “which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, . . . feed the flock of God which is among you, taking

the oversight *thereof*” (1 Pet. v. 1, 2). He addresses the elders as distinct from the people, and having the “oversight” of them.

(2.) “And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest” (Heb. viii. 11). This passage is *part* of a prophecy of Jeremiah (xxxi. 34), which St. Paul quotes to prove that the Christian covenant has superseded the Mosaic (Heb. viii. 6—13): but the apostle does not say, nor is it implied in his argument, that the *whole* of the prophecy had then been accomplished. The time is not yet come, when “all shall know” the Lord “from the least to the greatest:” and until that time is come, the prophecy is still future, the Christian ministry and its teaching are requisite.

(3.) “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things” (1 John ii. 20). “The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (ib. 27). These texts must be considered in connection with the context. The apostle had been telling those whom he addressed, of “anti-christs.” “They went out” (he wrote) “from us, but they were not of us; *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But” (he immediately adds) “ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things” (ib. 19, 20).

Then, after noticing the *doctrine* of antichrist, and after an exhortation (“ Let that . . . abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning ”) with a promise, he proceeds, “ These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you ” (ver. 26) : and immediately adds ; “ But the anointing,” &c. (ver. 27). The obvious meaning of the two texts now under consideration (ver. 20 and 27) is, that the disciples, *to whom he then wrote*, had been so well taught by the Holy Spirit the fundamental truths of the gospel, especially those which the antichrists of that day denied, that they needed not to be further taught them by man : but this in no way renders the office of the Christian minister unnecessary, or the setting apart of individuals to it unscriptural. The words are not addressed to *all*, or even to the generality of professing Christians : and the office of a minister of Christ is not only to “ preach the word,” but to “ reprove, rebuke, exhort ” (2 Tim. iv. 2) ; to “ put ” the brethren “ always in remembrance of ” the things concerning their everlasting salvation, even “ though ” they “ know *them*, and be established in the present truth ” (2 Pet. i. 12).

CHAPTER IX.

SCHISM.

IN the time of the apostles, no jealousy appears to have been entertained of the formation of new churches. On the contrary, it was matter of joy and thankfulness, when brethren proclaimed the gospel, and converts were made, and congregations were gathered from among unbelievers (Acts viii. 4—8; xi. 19—23; xxi. 18—20). The schism reprov'd in scripture is division in a settled Christian church; separation¹ from its appointed ministers; disobedience to its rulers, while the

¹ Archbishop Whateley has well observed, that separation from the church to which an individual belongs is not implied in merely joining and becoming a member of another church, “except when there is some *essential point of difference* between the two churches;” and that “when there is none, a man’s becoming a member of another church on changing his residence this is the very closest conformity to the principles and practice of the apostles.” He refers to the letters of recommendation mentioned in 2 Cor. (Kingdom of Christ, p. 193, n.)

church, the ministers, the rulers continue sound in doctrine, and scriptural in worship.

That schism (in this sense of the word) is a sin, appears from St. Paul's epistles. "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. i. 12, 13.) "While one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (1 Cor. iii. 4.) Thus he re-proves the Corinthians for schism, though unconnected with error in doctrine. The same apostle lays down the following precepts: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls" (Heb. xiii. 17). "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. v. 12, 13).

We should, however, observe the reasons assigned for these precepts—"for they watch for your souls"—"for their work's sake." If, then, those who have rule over us do not watch for our souls, do not labour among us in the gospel of Christ, we may respect their office, but we cannot "esteem them very highly" "for their work's sake:" and on further examination we shall find, that the obedience due to ecclesiastical, as well as that due to civil, rulers has its limits.¹ The

¹ On one occasion our Lord said: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit

civil, as well as the ecclesiastical, ruler derives his authority from God. To both the principle is applicable: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts v. 29). This principle was applied by the apostles to the "council" (ib. 27.) which possessed both ecclesiastical, and (in subordination to the Romans) civil authority. Ecclesiastical, as well as civil, rulers are men—fallible men. They are the teachers, as well as the rulers, of the church: and even in the time of the apostles there were false teachers, against whom the disciples are warned (2 Cor. xi. 4—15. Gal. i. 6—9; and 1 John ii. 18, 19; iv. 1; and 2 John 7—11). The coming also of "false teachers," who "privily" should "bring in damnable heresies," is foretold by St. Peter (2 Pet. ii. 1). Nor is the warning given merely with respect to *unauthorized, unordained* teachers. Had the warning been limited to such teachers, the disciples would not have been told to examine their doctrine, or the fruits of their doctrine: they would have been directed—unless their mission were authenticated by miraculous gifts—to inquire by what autho-

in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." (Matt. xxiii. 1—3.) But on another occasion he bade his disciples: "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees"—beware of their "doctrine" (Matt. xvi. 11, 12): and on another he reproved the pharisees and the scribes for "making the word of God of none effect through" their "traditions." (Mark vii. 13.) The result of these our Lord's instructions is—that, whatever spiritual authority the scribes and the pharisees might possess as sitting in Moses' seat, they were to be obeyed only so far as their teaching agreed with the law of God as given, and His will as revealed, by Moses and the prophets. The application to ecclesiastical rulers under the Christian dispensation is obvious.

rity they taught. Do the apostles give the disciples any such direction?

The apostle Paul cautions the Corinthians against those who should preach "ANOTHER JESUS, whom" he had "not preached" (2 Cor. xi. 4). "Such," he says, "*are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness" (ib. 13—15). To the Galatians he writes: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto ANOTHER GOSPEL: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though WE, or an ANGEL from heaven, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Gal. i. 6—9). What can be more decisive? No human authority—no, not that of an apostle—not even an angel from heaven, is to be listened to, if he preach another gospel, than that which Paul preached—nay, the apostle pronounced such a preacher "anathema." Surely then we are not to listen to such a preacher, being neither apostle nor angel, however clearly he may trace back his commission to an apostle through every link of the chain, or however high a rank he may hold in the visible church.

Again, St. John exhorts the disciples : “ Believe no every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God : because many false prophets are gone out into the world ” (1 John iv. 1). He does not tell the disciples to examine whether these teachers have derived their commission from an apostle—an inquiry which in those early days of the gospel might have been made with ease and certainty—no ! he tells them to “ try the spirits.” And how ? By their *doctrine*. “ Hereby ” (he adds) “ know ye the Spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God : and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God : and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them : because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world : therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God : he that knoweth God heareth us ; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error ” (ib. 2 – 6). We have here two tests, whereby to distinguish the true from the false teacher, the spirit of truth from the spirit of error. The true teacher “ confesseth,” the false teacher “ confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.” The spirit of truth “ heareth ” the apostles, derives its doctrine from them : “ the spirit of error ” “ heareth not ” the apostles, doth not derive its doctrine from them.

According to St. John, therefore, the disciples are to examine whether the doctrine, not whether the commission, is apostolic.

In another epistle the same apostle writes—"Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 7—11). Such is the direction which St. John gave to "the elect lady and her children" (ib. 1)—not a direction to inquire into the commission of such teachers—but a direction to shut their door at once against the deceivers, *simply on the ground of their doctrine*.

If we are not to receive such teachers into our house, surely we are not to join their congregations: and, though the injunction in terms applies only to those teachers who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, it *establishes the principle of trying a teacher by his doctrine*: while the anathema pronounced by St. Paul, when writing to the Galatians, extends to all who "preach any other gospel . . . than that which" he had "preached."

These repeated injunctions, to beware of false teachers ; to try the spirits, to judge of teachers by their fruits ; to examine the doctrine taught, whether it be conformable to that of the apostles ; clearly shew, that the obedience and submission due to those, who “ have the rule ” over us in the church, is not a blind obedience and submission to them merely because invested with ecclesiastical authority.

There are also passages in scripture, which clearly shew us that *churches* may apostatize and be cast off, and which distinctly warn us of the danger of clinging to an apostate church.

Our Lord himself threatened to remove the candlestick of the church of Ephesus, unless it repented (Rev. ii. 5) ; and to “ spue ” the church of Laodicea “ out of ” his “ mouth.” (Rev. iii. 16.)

St. Paul’s prophecy of the “ man of sin ” also is a warning, that we should neither blindly obey ecclesiastical rulers, nor continue in an apostate church. He there foretold, that there should “ come a falling away ”—an apostacy—“ and that man of sin ” should “ be revealed, the son of perdition ; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4.) It is foreign to my present purpose to point out, how accurately the apostle’s language describes the apostate church of Rome : it is sufficient to observe, that *some ecclesiastical* power or ruler is clearly intended. St. Paul says of this “ man of sin,” that

“ he as God sitteth in the temple of God ; ” and, that we may the better recognize him, the apostle further describes him as that “ wicked ” one, “ whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders.” (ib. 8, 9.) And what does the apostle say of those who should adhere to this “ man of sin ” ? “ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” he adds, “ in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie : that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (ib. 10—12.) An awful warning, that ecclesiastical rulers were to be expected, whom to follow is to follow them to our everlasting ruin.

Further—There is the prophecy respecting “ Babylon the Great,” and the warning—“ Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye not receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. xviii. 4.) It is not necessary for my present purpose to inquire, whether, under the name of “ Babylon the Great,” papal Rome is foretold. It is enough for my argument, that a professedly Christian, but really idolatrous, church is intended. That an idolatrous power is foretold, no one disputes. The offence, with which “ Babylon the Great ” is peculiarly charged (Rev. xvii. 1—5), is described in terms which are constantly used in the Old Testament to express the idolatry of apostate Jews or Israelites—rarely, if ever, to express the idolatry of the heathen.

The command to “come out of her” is given to the intent that God’s people “be not partakers of her sins.” It is, therefore, not a command to come out of the local limits of Babylon, whatever city be meant by that name; but a command to come out from “her sins,” not to be “partakers of her sins”—of her idolatry in particular. It was not to be expected that *the people of God* could be entangled in idolatry *avowedly* heathen. *Professing Christians* might, from fear of heathen persecution, apostatize, and deny the faith. But this is not the sin against which the people of God are here warned. They are exhorted to “come out from” “Babylon the Great”—not cautioned against joining her. It is implied, that *some* of them would be found in her, being, for a time, deceived by her: and “the voice from heaven” calls on them to “come out of her”—a warning to come out of some professedly Christian church, which should have apostatized into idolatry.

If, therefore, a church apostatize from the doctrine of our Lord and his apostles as revealed in scripture, or “pervert the gospel of Christ,” or teach “another gospel which is not another,” or depart from our Lord’s institution in the administration of baptism or the Lord’s supper; if it “confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh;” if it teach or practise idolatry or the worship of demons or dead men: in all and each of these cases separation is a duty. Such separation is not schism, except on the part of those who, by obstinately teaching unscriptural doctrine or persisting

in unscriptural rites, render it necessary for the people of God to "come out of" their corrupt and anti-christian communion. Those who remain in the apostate church, not those "who come out of her," are the schismatics. Such was the case when the reformation from Popery took place.

But a church may retain "the form of sound words," may continue sound and scriptural in the doctrine which it professes, in its worship, and in the administration of the sacraments; and yet the minister, whom it appoints over us, may preach doctrine fundamentally opposed to its scriptural doctrine; he may "preach another gospel" than that which Paul preached, "another Jesus" whom that apostle did not preach; he may teach a doctrine at variance with "the doctrine of Christ," which the apostle John taught. It is not our duty to listen to such a minister: and, if the rulers of the church do not rectify the evil, we may seek the bread of life elsewhere. If, either in such a case, or where the church to which we belong does not supply to us the means of grace in the place where we reside,¹ we join another communion which holds fast "the faith once delivered to the saints," this is not schism.

¹ In various parts of this country the established church has been unable to furnish an adequate supply of ministers for the rapidly increasing population.

CHAPTER X.

THE VISIBLE UNIVERSAL CHURCH.

WE have now finished our inquiry into the constitution of particular and local churches, as exhibited in scripture: and it has appeared, that in some cases several congregations or particular churches were united together into one local church, either under a bishop, elders, and deacons, or (without a presiding bishop) under elders, (then sometimes called also bishops or overseers) and deacons. We have now further to inquire, in what manner these local churches were, during the lives of the apostles, connected with each other, and whether any further progress was made during that period towards the organization of a visible universal church, or any directions were given by the apostles respecting the constitution or government of such a church.

While the twelve continued at Jerusalem, they exercised their apostolical authority over neighbouring

churches, sometimes alone and sometimes conjointly with the elders or with the church at Jerusalem. Thus, “when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John,” by imposition of whose hands disciples in that city received the Holy Ghost. (Acts viii. 14—17.) Afterwards, they, who had been scattered by the persecution which arose on the martyrdom of Stephen, preached the gospel at Antioch; “and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was at Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas” to Antioch. Barnabas went to Antioch; and then fetched the apostle Paul from Tarsus to that city. “And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch” (Acts xi. 19—26). At a later period a dissension arose in the church at Antioch respecting circumcision; and they sent Paul and Barnabas and others “to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders, about this question.” A meeting (which has been called the council ¹ of Jerusalem) was held: and letters were written in the name of “the apostles and elders and brethren,” in which their decision was expressed. These letters were received with joy by the Christians at Antioch; and were afterwards delivered in other cities, to be kept as “the decrees” “that were or-

¹ The details of the proceedings of this meeting will presently be examined; and the question considered—who deliberated thereat?

dained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." (Acts xv. 1—31 ; xvi. 4.) As the decrees of the apostles, they were of course binding on all the churches : and the concurrence of the elders and brethren at Jerusalem would recommend them to churches, which had received the gospel from that of Jerusalem. But it does not appear whether those churches considered themselves as in any way dependent upon the church at Jerusalem, except when acting conjointly with the apostles. The churches subsequently founded by St. Paul, the churches in particular of Asia Minor and Greece, were, as far as we can discover in scripture, independent of each other. Yet (as we may gather from the salutations in the apostolic epistles,¹ and from the letter written by the brethren at Ephesus to those in Achaia exhorting them to receive Apollos,² and from St. Paul's allusion³ to " epistles of commendation") the different churches of Christ were then in communion with each other. They had " one baptism : " and they were " all partakers of that one bread." There was a bond of union, a connection between them ; the bond of " one faith," and the unity of Christian love (Eph. iv. 4, 5 ; and 1 Cor. x. 17 ; Rom. xvi. 4) ; a bond also, a connection, arising out of the authority exercised by the apostles over different churches, more particularly by St. Paul over the

¹ See particularly Rom. xvi. 1, 2, 16, and 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 19, 20, and 2 Cor. xiii. 13 ; Philip. iv. 21, 22 ; Col. iv. 10, 15, and 1 Pet. v. 13 : and see also 2 Cor. viii.

² See Acts xviii. 27, 28.

³ See 2 Cor. iii. 1.

churches of the Gentiles. Epistles, which St. Paul wrote to one church, he directed to be read in another (Col. iv. 16, and 1 Thess. v. 27). Again—"So ordain I" (wrote the same apostle) "in ALL the churches." "That which cometh on me daily, the care of ALL the churches." (1 Cor. vii. 17; 2 Cor. xi. 28.) The expression "*all the churches*" is general: but he *seems* to have left the care of the churches of Judæa to the other apostles, he and Barnabas going to the heathen, James, Peter, and John to the circumcision (Gal. ii. 9). Again—to the Corinthians St. Paul wrote: "I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered *them* to you." (1 Cor. xi. 2.) "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." (1 Cor. xvi. 1.) The churches also of Judæa, having been the first settled, and having the apostles (except St. Paul) residing among them for a time, seem to have set an example which was followed by other churches. "Ye, brethren" (wrote St. Paul to the Thessalonians), "became followers of the churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus." (1 Thess. ii. 14.) And, in general, the authority exercised by the apostles preserved, to a certain extent, uniformity of practice among different churches. "We have no such custom" (wrote St. Paul to the Corinthians), "neither the churches of God." (1 Cor. xi. 16.) But this very expression shews, that there was then no visible universal church. Had such a church then existed, the apostle would scarcely have so written—

but rather—"We have no such custom, neither the UNIVERSAL (the CATHOLIC) church of God."

There was, in the time of the apostles, *this* bond of union among the churches. But, except as the churches were all subject to the general superintending authority of the apostles, I cannot discover in the New Testament any organization of an universal visible church, whether considered as consisting of all the members of each independent church, or as combining the different local churches into a federal body. The apostles have left no directions on record, by what form of government all professing Christians are to be joined together in one visible church, or how different local churches are to be federally united: nor did they attempt to appoint successors, in whom their general superintending authority over the churches should vest. When the last surviving apostle died, *that* authority ceased; and we find no substitute for it provided in scripture. We find, indeed, a superintending authority given to Timothy over the church at Ephesus, and to Titus over the disciples in the different cities of Crete: and we find mentioned the "angels" or bishops, of the seven churches of Asia: but we find no rulers (except the apostles) over these bishops, nor any provision for calling general councils.

During the lives of the apostles there was no *one* head on earth of the visible universal church. Everywhere in scripture Christ is spoken of as the Head of his church (Eph. i. 22; iv. 15). The apostles were all on an equality. Our Lord (as we have seen) repeat-

edly reproved claims to pre-eminence among the twelve whom he himself had appointed. St. Paul was recognized by the other apostles as an apostle on an equality with themselves; and to him was peculiarly committed the apostleship of the Gentiles by our Lord himself, as the apostles James and Peter and John acknowledged (Gal. ii. 9). To the apostles, indeed, our Lord committed the supreme rule over his church: but, while they acted in harmony and concert with each other, they do not appear to have adopted any plan for exercising *jointly* this authority. On one occasion, and one occasion only, they met in council to decide on a question which had arisen in the church; and it is necessary carefully to examine the proceedings on this occasion, and inquire whether they form a precedent for holding general councils after the death of all the apostles. But, for this purpose, we must trace shortly the previous history of the church, and its state at the time when the council was held; though many parts of this history have already been separately noticed, as bearing upon other questions. After the day of Pentecost, the church at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of the apostles, increased rapidly in numbers till the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts ii. to vi. *passim*). Then “there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of JUDÆA and SAMARIA, except the apostles;” and they “went everywhere preaching the word.” They “travelled as far as PHENICE, and

CYPRUS, and ANTIOCH.” (Acts viii. 1, 4; xi. 19.) Meanwhile Saul, the persecutor, had been converted, and called to be an apostle (Acts ix. 1—22). “Then had all the churches rest throughout all JUDÆA and GALILEE and SAMARIA, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.” (Acts ix. 31.) Particular notice is taken of the respective churches in the cities of Samaria and Antioch: and both appear to have been very considerable. (Acts viii. 5—8, 12, 14—17; xi. 20—25.) From the church at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas were, by express direction of the Holy Spirit, sent forth on a missionary journey, in which they travelled through *Cyprus*, *Pamphylia*, *Pisidia*, and *Lycaonia*, and “ordained them elders in every church:” and, when they had accomplished this work, they returned to Antioch, “and there abode long time with the disciples.” (Acts xiii. xiv.)

From this survey of the progress of the gospel we learn, that, before the return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, there were already churches established throughout Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria; in Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia; and that there were disciples, probably churches, in Phenice.

It was afterwards, and while Paul and Barnabas abode at Antioch, that certain men came down from Judæa, and taught the disciples in that city, that, unless they were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they could not be saved. “When, therefore, Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with

them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up ;” and, after reminding those who were assembled of the circumstances of the conversion of Cornelius and his Gentile friends, asked—“ Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear ? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Paul and Barnabas, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.” James then addressed the brethren ; and concluded in these words—“ My sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God : but that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole

church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas : *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren : and they wrote *letters* by them after this manner ; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia : Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law : to whom we gave no *such* commandment : it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have hazarded their lives for the name of Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things : that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication : from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well ” (Acts xv. 1—29).

The council being thus concluded, Paul and Barnabas returned with Judas and Silas to Antioch, and delivered the epistle to the disciples, which when “ they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation ” (Acts xv. 30, 31). Afterwards Paul and Silas “ went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra,” cities of Lycaonia,¹ and he

¹ Acts xiv. 6.

took Timothy to travel with him. "And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the regions of Galatia," &c. (Acts xv. 40, 41 ; xvi. 1—6.)

Let us now examine this narrative.

The question about circumcision was raised by some, who had gone to Antioch from the church at Jerusalem, but to whom that church had given no such ¹ commission. The church, indeed, at Jerusalem in their letter admitted, that these men "went out" from them ; but, after adverting to their doctrine, denied having authorized them to go to Antioch and teach such doctrine. These men seem to have represented themselves as teachers from Jerusalem ; and the disciples at Antioch probably concluded that they came with authority from the twelve apostles, and were thus perplexed between the authority of these new teachers and that of Paul. It was, therefore, natural to appeal to the twelve and to the church also at Jerusalem, from which the disciples at Antioch had first received the word, and from which these new teachers (though un-

¹ The expression used respecting them by the church at Jerusalem in their circular letter is—*οἷς ἡ διεστείλαμεθα*—literally, "to whom we gave no commandment"—where the authorised version supplies the word "*such*"—"to whom we gave no *such* commandment ;" viz. to teach such doctrine. This *may* be the meaning. But I rather think, the church intended to disavow having sent them at all, or given them any commission.

commissioned) had come. And, though Paul, by virtue of his apostolic authority, might have decided the question himself, the peace and prosperity of the whole Christian church was much better consulted, by referring the matter to "the apostles and elders" at Jerusalem.

The question was referred, not to the apostles only, but to "the apostles and elders" at Jerusalem, to the apostles—the appointed rulers of the universal church—and to the elders—the rulers and pastors under them of the church which was at Jerusalem. Though the apostles, by virtue of their power to bind and to loose, had authority of themselves to decide this question, the reference to "the apostles and elders" was obviously a wise measure. The doctrine taught by the new teachers was a doctrine "subverting" the "souls" of those who received it: and yet it was one, in favour of which Jewish prejudice ran strong. A decision, therefore, of the question by the unanimous opinion both of the apostles and of the elders of the church at Jerusalem (most of them probably, if not all, converted Jews,) was obviously best calculated to settle it to the satisfaction of all parties, and restore harmony to the churches.

"The APOSTLES and ELDERS came together for to consider of this matter." These, it should *seem*, constituted the whole *deliberative* body of the council. To them only the question was by the church at Antioch referred: they only are mentioned as having come together "to consider of this matter;" and,

without noticing any others as present, the inspired historian immediately adds: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them." Yet others *were present*. We afterwards find, that "all the multitude gave audience to Barnabas and Paul:" and the letters sent by the council were written in the name of "the APOSTLES AND ELDERS AND BRETHREN." The *brethren*, therefore, were present as well as the apostles and elders. They also acquiesced in the opinion expressed by Peter and James, though they do not appear to have taken any part in the discussion. The letters were written with the concurrence of "the apostles and elders" and "the whole church," and in the name of "the apostles and elders and brethren"—though the letters are afterwards mentioned as "the decrees," "that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." (Acts xvi. 4, 5.)

A council thus constituted—a council comprising all those to whom our Lord had given power to "loose" and to "bind"—a council assembled to consider whether the Gentiles should be loosed from or bound by the ritual law of Moses—was, in pronouncing its unanimous decision, well entitled to say: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us." But such language becomes no council that has been since holden; because, since the death of the apostles, no council has been or can be holden, whose decisions have the promise made to the apostles: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatso-

ever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 18.)

Does this council, in other respects—in its constitution and proceedings—exhibit a model for subsequent councils? Can it be considered as a *general* council? In one point of view it was rather a council or synod of the church which was at Jerusalem—for Paul and Barnabas and their companions were sent “to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about” the question of circumcision: and they were, at Jerusalem, “received of the CHURCH, and of the apostles and elders.” In another point of view, it was a *general* council—for it comprised all the apostles, all the appointed rulers of the universal church. But it can scarcely be considered as a general council in any other sense. While it comprised *all* the elders of the church which was at Jerusalem, it comprised but few members of the church of Antioch, none of the brethren from Phenice, no representatives (except the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem) of the churches of Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria, no member of the various churches in Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, over which Paul and Barnabas had appointed elders. Guided, as this council was, by the then rulers of the universal church—rulers to whom the Holy Spirit had been granted in such fulness as to preserve them from all error in what they authoritatively taught or authoritatively decreed—its unanimous decision could not but be binding on all the churches. The letters, accordingly, of the council were addressed to the

brethren in Syria and Cilicia, as well as to the brethren in Antioch who had sent the deputation; and the decrees were delivered to other churches also "for to keep." (Acts xv. 23; xvi. 4.) But, as this council comprised not one diocesan bishop (indeed diocesan bishops, as distinguished from elders, were then unknown in the church), nor even an elder from any church except the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch (though there were then many other churches with their elders), it presents no model for subsequent general councils. If the principle on which its proceedings were conducted were followed, elders would be admitted to deliberate, and the laity to concur in the decision. But, in truth, it was a council peculiarly constituted, which furnishes neither model, nor precedent, nor principle for any other.

The messengers of the church of Antioch were *sent* to "the apostles and elders" which were at Jerusalem *for their judgment* on the controversy which had arisen. "The apostles and elders," to whom the question was so referred, deliberated and decided upon it. The laity were present: and, without joining (as far as appears) in the discussion, assented to and concurred in the decision, which is still called the DECREE OF "THE APOSTLES AND ELDERS." It does not follow, that, when a council meets to deliberate on the affairs of the general church, or when a synod of a particular church meets to deliberate on its own concerns, the laity are to be excluded from taking a part in the deliberations: nor, on the other hand, can the precedent be altogether relied

upon, as requiring their concurrence to give validity to the decision.

In scripture, therefore, we find no individual marked out as head on earth of the universal church, no plan laid down of a council to govern it, no constitution delineated for it.

It has by some been stated, that when a local or territorial church sent forth evangelists or missionaries to convert the inhabitants of another city or country, and those evangelists or missionaries succeeded in forming a new church, such new church regarded the one from which it received the gospel, as the mother church; that its ministers paid obedience to the presiding minister of the mother church; and that, in this manner, the bishop as well as the elders and deacons of a new church became ecclesiastically subject to the bishop of the mother church. This may, in some instances, have been the case. But I can find no such organization in scripture. When the question arose respecting circumcision, the appeal was made by the church at Antioch, not to the church at Jerusalem, but "to the APOSTLES AND ELDERS" which were at Jerusalem.

Nor, indeed, except in the cases of Samaria and of Antioch and of the churches settled by Paul and Barnabas when sent forth by the church of Antioch (Acts viii. 1—17; xi. 19—26: xiii. and xiv.), do we find in scripture any churches established by persons *sent forth by another church*.¹ The other Gentile churches

¹ The apostle Paul, indeed, while preaching at Corinth received sup-

—the churches of Ephesus, Corinth, Colosse, Philippi, and Thessalonica—were settled by St. Paul, acting on his own authority as apostle; not as sent on any mission by any other church. *These* were distinct churches, not subordinate to any other church: and over them Paul, “the apostle of the Gentiles,” appears to have exercised almost exclusive authority (Rom. xi. 13, and 1 Cor. vii. 17; xi. 2, 34; xvi. 1—3, and 2 Cor. xi. 6; xiii. 2, 10).

We cannot, therefore, trace (independently of apostolical superintendence) *external* unity in the time of the apostles beyond this; that, in various cities, the different congregations were united into one local church. To this extent, as we have seen, external unity had then proceeded: and this precedent furnishes us with a principle for further extending this unity where circumstances lead the way—where, for example, a mother church retains authority over neighbouring churches which have sprung out from it, or where the various churches scattered throughout a country under a Christian government are united into one national church. The precedent is the stronger in favour of extended union, because the apostles carried the system of combination as far as it could be carried in their time, when all their proceedings were exposed

port from other churches (2 Cor. xi. 7—12): but he was *not sent by these churches*. And other brethren, travelling to preach the gospel to the heathen, were helped on their way by the disciples (3 John 5—8), as Paul hoped to be helped by the Corinthians to proceed to regions beyond them (2 Cor. x. 15, 16). But in neither case was the preacher considered as *sent forth* by the church.

to the suspicion of a civil government avowedly heathen, and were watched by the Jews with hostile jealousy. And, as we know from prophecy that all "the kingdoms of this world" shall "become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. xi. 15), we may look forward to a period, when the whole world will be both civilly and ecclesiastically under one Christian government, and the church of Christ will be one and universal, externally and visibly, as well as spiritually. At present, while the governments of different nations have not even federal union, it seems impracticable for the churches of different nations to be united under one ecclesiastical government; but towards this blessed result (that of the Church of Christ being one visibly as well as in spirit) unity in each national church is obviously an important step: and I cannot but think, that, when the apostles formed the different congregations of a city into one local church, they set us an example, and pointed out the way in which we should, under the divine blessing, proceed towards the attainment of unity in the universal church. The *territorial system* is that to which their example directs our attention. But this system must be constructed with safeguards and regulations, without which it may starve instead of feeding the flock, —create instead of preventing schism. It is essential to the right working of the system, that each district should not be too large, either in extent or population, for the pastor appointed to it, or to him and the assistant minister or ministers appointed to labour with him.

It is essential, that, while the pastor is protected against officious interference on the part of his superior, the controlling authority in the church should have power not only to remove a minister who persists in preaching fundamentally erroneous doctrine, but also to supply, by nominating an assistant, the deficiency of a minister who imperfectly performs his duty whether from age or infirmity, or from negligence, ignorance, or incompetency. When so constructed, the territorial system,¹ will, under the divine blessing, proceed towards the attainment of unity in the universal church. The territorial system, whether under episcopalian or presbyterian government, has a principle of combination which the congregational system has not. When churches avowing the congregational or independent system meet together in synod, they depart from their own principle and verge towards presbyterianism: while, on the other hand, friendly intercourse and Christian love between national churches, holding the great truths of the gospel, and administering in conformity to scripture the Christian sacraments, though differing in some particulars of external discipline, cannot but be regarded as a happy movement towards the external unity of the visible church.

¹ I am simply speaking of a system, which assigns to a minister the pastoral charge of a district, without entering into the question how far and under what limitations he should be allowed to exclude other ministers—a question of which we find no solution in Scripture. The authority to exclude has in this country been allowed and exercised to an extent which has created, instead of preventing, schism.

CHAPTER XI.

DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH, MAINTENANCE OF MINISTERS, AND NATIONAL CHURCH.

THE church, such as it was immediately after the day of Pentecost, well corresponded with its title—"the church of God"—"the kingdom of God." "They continued," says the inspired historian, "stedfastly in the APOSTLES' DOCTRINE AND FELLOWSHIP, AND IN BREAKING OF BREAD AND IN PRAYERS. . . And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved." (Acts ii. 42—47.) There was stedfastness in apostolic doctrine, and Christian love, and the partaking of the Lord's

Supper, and the worship of God ; but in all these particulars we find a lamentable falling away afterwards, even in the time of the apostles ;—false doctrine (Gal. i. 6—8, and 1 John iv. 1—3, and 2 John 7, and Jude 4), schism, disorders both in administering the Lord's Supper and in public worship. (1 Cor. i. 11—17, xi. 17—22, xiv. 5—40.) There was also in the Pentecostal church community of goods : but this practice of the primitive church at Jerusalem was (as we have seen¹) not intended to be perpetuated ; nor, when other churches were settled, was it introduced into them. But departure from “the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,” and disorder in the administration of the sacrament or in public worship, are, whenever noticed in Scripture, marked with apostolic censure : and the churches of Judæa are, in one of the earliest² of St. Paul's epistles which have been handed down to us, held forth as an example for the imitation of other churches. He commends the brethren of Thessalonica for being “followers of the churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thess. ii. 13, 14.) At a later period, the same apostle, after censuring as unbecoming a practice which had crept into the church of Corinth, adds : “We have no such custom, neither the churches of God.” (1 Cor. xi. 16.) There was obviously, *at this time*, a certain measure of uniformity in the customs of different churches. The apostles regulated the practice of the different churches, delivering

¹ See *antè*, ch. v.

² See Tate's Continuous History of St. Paul, p. 50.

to them “ordinances” to “keep” (1 Cor. xi. 2); of which a specimen is preserved to us in the same epistle (1 Cor. xiv. 26—40)—the general principle being: “Let all things be done unto edifying;” “Let all things be done decently and in order” (ib. 26, 40). This general principle is obviously applicable to every church, in every age, and under all circumstances: but the customs, prevalent generally throughout the churches, are held forth by the apostle as customs which other churches would do well to follow, rather than as customs which (except when resting on moral grounds) they were absolutely bound to adopt.

Each church, of course, had authority within itself to enforce its own practice,¹ so far as it was consistent with Christian principle, and necessary to the preservation of order; and the special reproofs and directions, which the apostle gives to the Corinthian church respecting their assemblies for public worship and the administration of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. xi. 4, 5, 17—34, xiv. 5—40), necessarily imply, that the church had power to rectify the abuses which he censured. But the discipline, of which we read in the New Testament as exercised or to be exercised by the church over its members, relates principally to controversies between individuals, and to offences requiring the censure of the church.

Our Lord himself gave directions respecting contro-

¹ The questions as to the administration of baptism, *by whom* and *to whom* it was administered, and as to the Lord’s Supper, by whom it was administered, have already been examined. Antè, ch. ii, vi, and vii.

versies between his disciples, in a passage which has been already considered.¹ When milder methods of obtaining redress had been tried in vain, the injured party was to “tell it to the church;” and, if the offender should neglect to “hear the church,” then the complainant might regard him as “a heathen man and a publican;” he was at liberty to seek redress as he would against a heathen; probably also the church would exclude the offender from its communion till he had submitted to its decision. The church, to which the complaint was to be made, was (as we have seen) either the particular or local church to which the offender belonged: but our Lord did not specify whether the church as a body, or its minister, or an arbitrator appointed by the church, was to hear the complaint and adjudicate it. St. Paul is more explicit on these points. He wrote thus to the Corinthians.

“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this present life? If, then, ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed² in the church. I speak

¹ I refer to Matt. xviii. 15—18, which has been considered, *antè* ch. ii.

² “Those who are least esteemed” τὰς ἐξεδειγμένους—which (it has been thought) *may* mean *private judges*, or arbitrators appointed by the parties; such as are said to have been in use among the Jews. But the apostle *seems* rather to speak of persons set to judge by the church.

to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves* to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.” (1 Cor. vi. 1—8.) Great corruptions existed in the church of Corinth: brother defrauded brother; and the injured party, instead of following our Lord’s directions, went to law with the offender, and that before the unbelievers, before the unjust, not before the saints. The apostle reproves both parties, and (it seems) the church also; the offender for his fraud, the injured brother for going to law, the church for not appointing a proper person to judge between the brethren. In order that our Lord’s injunctions might be carried into effect, the apostle intimates that the Corinthians should appoint a “wise man,” one “able to judge between his brethren,” to execute that office. He does not himself interfere in the choice; nor does he refer it exclusively to the rulers of the church; he addresses himself to the Corinthian Christians in general. At the same time, the tenor of his observations shows the *gravamen* of his censure to have been, that Christian brethren went to

than of arbitrators chosen by the parties in controversy: and I think, that the word is properly rendered in the authorized version, but that the sentence should be read as a reproof—“Now, if ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, ye set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church?”

law with each other *before unbelievers*. By such conduct they brought scandal on their profession, and exhibited themselves as actuated by worldly motives, not by that love to the brethren which was the badge of their discipleship—conduct whereby the progress of the gospel was impeded. In courts, also, established by a heathen government, judges presided who were heathen, and whose proceedings and judgments were of necessity conformable, not to the Christian rule or the law of God, but to heathen laws and to heathen principles. Such a tribunal could not justly settle differences between Christians; and, if the testimony of Christians were required before such a tribunal, the witnesses might be called upon to swear by them who were no gods. We may, however, infer from St. Paul's reasoning, that, when the government of a country has become avowedly Christian, when Christianity is held to be part and parcel of the law of the land, and the judges are at least by profession Christians,¹ the

¹ Now that some are eagerly seeking to unchristianize our yet professedly Christian legislature, it deserves consideration what effect such an *organic* change may have on our courts of law. If Jews are admitted into the legislature, can any reason remain for not raising them to the bench?—nay, if admitted into the House of Lords, they will thereby become members of the supreme court of justice. I say nothing of the incongruity of a minister of the gospel offering up (as the case might happen) prayers in a congregation consisting exclusively of the speaker and clerks, all of the Jewish persuasion, and consequently blasphemers of that holy name in which the prayers are offered up—this incongruity has no bearing on the subject now under discussion: but I ask, whether a Christian could, consistently with our Lord's injunction as interpreted by St. Paul, go to law with a Christian before a Jew, or a professed unbeliever?

directions of our Lord in this particular are observed in the spirit, if not in the letter also, by those, who, before they go to law, endeavour, by private representation and the intervention of Christian friends, to bring about a reasonable accommodation.

Such are the directions contained in the New Testament for settling the disagreements which may arise between Christians. Provision is also made for the exercise of discipline by the church over its members. The offences in respect of which, under apostolic authority, we find this discipline exercised or directed to be exercised, may be generally classed as (1) offences against the moral precepts of the law or the gospel; (2) schism; (3) heresy, or departure from the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. The discipline exercised was exclusion from the church and from Christian fellowship, and on repentance re-admission; this exclusion, in the case of ministers, involving deposition or suspension from the ministry, while ministers possibly were sometimes silenced without being excommunicated. This will appear on an examination of the different particulars.

1. The case of the incestuous member of the Corinthian church, which has already been fully considered¹ in connection with another subject, is a case in which we find exhibited both the exclusion and the re-admission of one who had committed a great and scandalous sin—we find in this case a solemn excom-

¹ See *antè*, ch. ii.

munication and a subsequent absolution on repentance. Again—to the Thessalonians St. Paul writes: “We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us:” and, after explaining what he meant by walking disorderly—“there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies”—and giving some appropriate exhortations against such conduct, he adds, “if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.” (2 Thess. iii. 6, 11, 14, 15.)

2. St. Paul gave to the Romans a general direction as to schismatics. “Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” (Rom. xvi. 17.) *Avoid them*—a command which seems necessarily to involve exclusion from the church, at least from the society of Christians.

3. With regard to heretics, we have St. Paul’s direction to Titus. “A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject.” (Tit. iii. 10.) The rejection¹ commanded in this passage imports exclusion from the church. The same apostle

¹ “Reject”—*παραιτοῦ*. The word clearly means to *refuse admission* into the class of widows, in 1 Tim. v. 11, and to *reject*, in Heb. xii. 25, and in 1 Tim. iv. 7.

warns Timothy to hold "faith and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom" (the apostle adds) "I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. i. 19, 20.) He had excluded them from the church, the kingdom of God; and they had in consequence become the slaves of Satan, the prince of this world. He had excommunicated them, in order to bring them to repentance.

It is necessary further to examine, *by whom*, in these several cases, this discipline was exercised. In the case of the offending member of the Corinthian church, the apostle Paul himself pronounced the sentence of excommunication (1 Cor. v. 3—5): and afterwards (as in such a case no one else could remit the sentence) solemnly forgave him in the name of Christ (2 Cor. ii. 10). But the church might themselves have excommunicated the offender: for the apostle severely reprobated them for not having done so (1 Cor. v. 1, 2). In like manner the direction respecting those who caused divisions is given to the brethren generally at Rome; and the direction respecting any brother, who walked disorderly, or disobeyed the apostle's word by his epistle, is given to "the church of the Thessalonians." In cases, therefore, of this description—offences of the two first classes committed by private Christians—each church has authority, and it is its duty, to excommunicate the offender, unless on warning and expostulation he repent: and, though the

apostle in these passages does not specify in what manner the church is to exercise this authority, yet, from the directions which the same apostle gave to the Corinthians respecting controversies between disciples, we may conclude that it is to be exercised, not by the church or congregation assembled as a body, but either by its rulers or by a judge appointed for the purpose—the particular mode of constituting the tribunal being left to the church or its rulers. In all the recorded cases of the third class, the sentence was pronounced or to be pronounced by a superior ruler—it was pronounced by the apostle in the cases of Hymenæus and Alexander; and it was to be pronounced, in the case of a heretic, by Titus, to whom the apostle had given authority over the churches of Crete. We may conjecture, though it does not distinctly appear, that Hymenæus and Alexander were ministers; and that in speaking of “a man that is an heretic,” the apostle referred principally to *teachers* of false doctrine. There are obvious reasons why the congregation should not take upon itself to excommunicate or depose their minister; though, if the minister preaches doctrine fundamentally opposed to the gospel which the apostle preached, the congregation (as we have seen) are required to withdraw from his ministry; and Christians are forbidden to receive him into their houses.

It should further be observed, that, if there is no scriptural authority for a minister being deposed or suspended except by a superior ruler, then there is no provision made in scripture for the case of a supreme

minister of an independent church—its bishop, for example—falling into heresy or any scandalous sin; though it is obvious, from the many warnings contained in the New Testament against false and wicked teachers, that such cases were to be expected. It was left to the church to find a remedy for such cases, as they should arise: and we have here a further particular, in which the apostles have not been directed to leave on record a minute delineation of the constitution of the church.

It is important, before we quit this subject, to remark—*first*, that, though an apostle in a very few special cases inflicted miraculous punishment, such power was neither transmitted to any other individual nor committed to any church; nor was any temporal consequence annexed to excommunication beyond the loss of Christian society—exclusion, not from the common offices of humanity, but only from the closer and more affectionate ties of Christian brotherhood; and, *secondly*, that the discipline of excommunication was exercised with the utmost tenderness towards the offender, having for its two-fold object his reformation, and the preservation of the purity of the church.

That the power of miraculous punishment was restricted to the apostles, and was by them exercised only in special cases, and under special direction, has been already shewn:¹ and that the excommunicated member of a church was not to be excluded from the

¹ Antè, ch. iv.

common offices of humanity or from dealings in ordinary matters of business, may be inferred from our Lord's direction: "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. xviii. 17), as interpreted by the parable of the Samaritan: and the same principle is distinctly laid down by the apostle, when, after directing the Thessalonians to "have no company with" any man that obeyed not his word by that epistle, he adds; "Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother" (2 Thess. iii. 14, 15). The direction respecting a man of immoral character who "is called a brother"—"with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. v. 11)—forbids, not the common transactions of business or acts of common humanity, but friendly intercourse—such intercourse as would encourage the offender, or expose the gospel to be blasphemed.

The passage also, just cited from the second epistle to the Thessalonians, shews the tenderness towards the offender, with which the discipline of the church was exercised in the time of the apostles. The principle is further illustrated by the apostle's direction to Titus respecting "a man that is an heretic." He was simply to *reject*¹ him—and that not till "after a first and second admonition." In the same spirit the same apostle writes to the Galatians: "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness" (Gal. vi. 1). Even when he threatened some among the Corinthians with

¹ "Reject"—as to the meaning of this word, see *antè*, p. 264.

chastisement by the exercise of his miraculous powers as an apostle, he spoke of that power as given him by our Lord "to edification, and not to destruction" (2 Cor. xiii. 2, 3, 10 ; x. 1—8).

Both objects of excommunication are specified by the apostle, when directing the Corinthians to concur in his sentence of excommunication against the incestuous member of their church. He commands them, as he had himself judged, "to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, THAT THE SPIRIT MAY BE SAVED in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5): and asks—"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven" (ib. 6, 7). So when he excommunicated Hymenæus and Alexander, it was "that they" might "learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. i. 20): and doubtless he also contemplated in this proceeding the benefit of the church; for, writing (in his subsequent epistle) to Timothy, respecting some, that "their word will eat as doth a canker," he added, "of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus: who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. ii. 17. 18). To prevent Hymenæus and Alexander from overthrowing the faith of others could not but be one object, which the apostle had in view when he excommunicated them.

The next subject of inquiry is—what light the scriptures throw on the question, so much agitated in the present day, of the maintenance of ministers.

That those, who preach the gospel, are to be provided with a competent maintenance, is clearly laid down in the New Testament ; and a reason is assigned, which commends itself to every man's sense of justice : “ the workman is worthy of his meat ” (Matt. x. 10)—“ the labourer is worthy of his hire ” (Luke x. 7). In the directions¹ which our Lord gave first to the twelve apostles (Matt. x. 9—15, Luke ix. 3—5), and afterwards to the seventy disciples, he commanded them to “ carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes ” (Luke x. 4—12) while travelling on the journey on which he then sent them ; but to claim the hospitality of those to whom they came. These heralds of the gospel were, indeed, endued with power to work miracles in attestation of their divine mission : but the ground, on which our Lord rested their claim to be hospitably received and entertained, is equally applicable to every faithful minister—“ the labourer is worthy of his hire.” And this ground remained unshaken, though, as has been observed, our Lord gave them other directions, when a more extensive commission was entrusted to them.

Accordingly, on this principle, the apostle Paul asserts his own right, and the right of all who preach the gospel, to live of the gospel : “ Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges ? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof ? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock ? . . . If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it*

* ¹ These directions have been already considered, *antè*, ch. ii.

a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are* not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? EVEN SO HATH THE LORD ORDAINED THAT THEY WHICH PREACH THE GOSPEL SHOULD LIVE OF THE GOSPEL. But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for *it were* better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." (1 Cor. ix. 7—15.)

The apostle's declaration of our Lord's will, "that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel," is not weakened, but strengthened, by his refusal, under special circumstances, to receive maintenance from a church in which he was ministering—the very exceptions which he made, and the reasons which he assigned for those exceptions, establish the general principle. At Corinth he wrought at his occupation of a tent-maker (Acts xviii. 1—3); and "that which was lacking to" him "the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied." (2 Cor. xi. 9.) He chose rather to "suffer all things, lest" he "should hinder the Gospel of Christ:" yet he asserted the power to belong to him, though he "used" it not. (1 Cor. ix. 12.) "I have preached to you" (he wrote to the Corinthians) "the Gospel of God freely. I robbed other

churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service. . . . In all *things* I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? Because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we." (2 Cor. xi. 7—12.) The same apostle assigns another reason for having laboured for his own support while preaching the gospel at Ephesus. "I have coveted" (he declared in his charge to the elders of Ephesus) "no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak." (Acts xx. 33—35.) He assigns the same as one of his reasons for maintaining himself, while he preached the gospel to the then infant church of Thessalonica—but he assigns a further reason also, in terms of exquisite tenderness. "Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we MIGHT HAVE BEEN BURDENSOME, AS THE APOSTLES OF CHRIST. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: ¹ so being affection-

¹ This expression refers obviously to the church of Thessalonica when in its *infancy*. At a later period, "the brethren" "from Macedonia,"

ately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of Christ only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear to us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God." (1 Thess. ii. 5—9.) "We behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT POWER, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thess. iii. 7—10.)

Thus did the apostle, writing both to the Corinthians and to the Thessalonians, strongly assert his "power," his right,¹ to live of the gospel; while, at the same time, he explained the reasons which had induced him, in their cases, to forego the right. Nor did he assert the right on behalf of the apostles only. The principle, on which he asserts it, applies to all the preachers of the gospel; and in some of the passages quoted he expressly claims it for them. In other epistles he lays down, without any reference to his own case, the duty of maintaining the ministers of the gospel as incum-

among whom probably were some from Thessalonica, supplied what he lacked at Corinth. (2 Cor. xi. 9.)

¹ The Greek word *ἐξουσία* has this sense in these passages, as in Heb. xiii. 10. Comp. Rev. xxii. 14.

bent on those to whom they minister. "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things." (Gal. vi. 6.) "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his hire." (1 Tim. v. 17, 18.) It is not necessary to decide, whether (as some think) the word translated "honour" should in this passage be rendered "wages" or "reward:" for, even retaining the established version, it is clear that the apostle applies to the elders the scriptural doctrine, that "the labourer *is* worthy of his hire."

These passages fully prove "that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel;" and that the duty of providing them with a maintenance lies on those who hear the word, when (as in the time of the apostles) no other provision is made for the purpose. But the duty is not limited to the maintenance of the minister by those to whom he ministers. The supply, indeed, which the brethren from Macedonia furnished to St. Paul, while preaching the gospel at Corinth, may, perhaps, be considered as an expression of Christian love, rather than the performance of a strict (or what moralists call a perfect) obligation. But the same apostle, in the same epistle in which he declared his resolution not to accept from the Corinthians a maintenance while preaching the gospel to them, expresses his "hope," that, when their "faith is in-

creased," he "shall be enlarged by"¹ them, "to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond" them (2 Cor. x. 15, 16). More distinctly still St. John wrote to the well-beloved Gaius—"Thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: because that for his name's sake they went forth, TAKING NOTHING OF THE GENTILES. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth." (3 John 5—8.) The apostle here intimates, that missionaries would go forth to preach the gospel to the Gentiles; that, till the Gentiles became converts to the faith, these ministers would receive from them no support; and that it is the duty of Christians to be fellow-helpers with such ministers, bringing them forward on their journey, and furnishing them other assistance while their circumstances need it. The same principle, fairly carried out, imposes on the wealthier Christian the duty of contributing from his wealth to the religious instruction of his poorer brethren.

While the apostles thus plainly asserted the minister's right to a maintenance, and enjoined on the disciples the duty of providing that maintenance, they abstained from enforcing the performance of the duty by any other method than that of apostolical precept and moral suasion. They prescribed no rule by which the contri-

¹ "Enlarged by"—so the established version. In the margin, "magnified in."

bution of each disciple should be fixed—still less did they threaten with ecclesiastical censures those who should neglect their duty in this particular.¹ St. Paul even chose to forego his claim in his own case on several occasions, rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Yet the very words, in which the apostle asserted his right, seem to imply that he had authority to enforce it. “If others be partakers of *this* power (ἐξουσίας) over you, *are* not we rather?” (1 Cor. ix. 12.) “Not because we have not power” (ἐξουσίαν) (2 Thess. iii. 9). And power obviously belongs to every society to exclude from its privileges those, who will not contribute to its burthens: while a Christian society should in no case without necessity exercise this power, and never should exclude any one who from poverty cannot contribute. It is one peculiar glory of Christianity, that “to the poor the gospel is preached.” Hence results a duty incumbent on the rich, to provide the means of Christian instruction and Christian worship both for themselves and for the poor.

During the time of the apostles, all the governments of the earth were heathen. To them therefore no precept could be addressed respecting the support of a

¹ Our Lord indeed declared to his apostles: “Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city” (Matt. x. 14, 15). And when he sent forth the seventy, he pronounced a similar punishment against any city that should not receive them. (Luke x. 10—12.) But the apostles do not appear to have exercised this power for enforcing a *maintenance* from *Gentiles*.

Christian ministry. The churches of Christ in those days were of necessity voluntary societies : but it does not thence follow, that they were always so to continue, or that it is not the duty of a Christian government to secure to its people the means and opportunities of Christian worship and Christian instruction.

This brings us to the last remaining question—Is it the duty of a Christian government to maintain a National Church? The affirmative has, by different writers, been established by arguments so unanswerable,¹ that I hesitate to enter upon the discussion, lest I should weaken the force of what has already been written : but my review of the Christian Church, as exhibited in scripture, and of the instruction which scripture furnishes for the guidance of states and individuals in respect of the Church, might seem incomplete, if I left this topic wholly unnoticed. Direct precept, indeed, or example on this question, from our Lord and his apostles, we do not find recorded ; nor could we expect to find either precept or example respecting the *especial* duties of a *Christian* ruler, as a *Christian*, since, when the gospel was promulgated, no Christian government existed. Yet we find laid down in scripture general principles, from which it may be satisfactorily deduced, that it is the duty of a Christian ruler to maintain a national Church for the pure worship of God and the preaching of the gospel.

These scriptural principles are the following—

1. It is the duty of the ruler to promote the welfare

¹ See (among others) McNeile's Lectures on the Church, Lect. iv.

of his subjects by every lawful method, according to the power with which he is entrusted—and when I speak of the ruler, I mean the individual or individuals, whether one or many, to whom, by the laws and constitution of the country, is entrusted the supreme authority, executive or legislative.

2. The most effectual method, in which the ruler can promote the welfare of his subjects, is by providing for the worship of God and the teaching of true religion throughout the nation ;—and, *consequently*,

3. It is the duty of a Christian ruler to provide (as far as the authority committed to him by the constitution enables him to provide) for the support of a national Church, wherein God may be worshipped ; and by the ministers whereof Christianity may be taught, according to the truth of scripture, throughout the length and breadth of the land, so that every subject may have the opportunity, if he will use it, of joining in such public worship, and hearing the gospel preached.

I. The first of these propositions obviously follows from St. Paul's doctrine respecting the ruler—"the power." "He is the minister of God to thee for good." (Rom. xiii. 4.) The apostle is speaking of the ruler's *office*, though, when he wrote, the ruler's power was often abused, and made an instrument of oppression. From the ruler's office, from the object for which he is appointed of God, his *duty* necessarily results.

II. The truth of the second proposition, as a scrip-

tural principle, will appear from the following considerations.

1. If we would have the blessing of God rest upon a nation, God must be worshipped by the people in sincerity and truth. To this effect we have both the plain declaration of scripture, that “righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people” (Prov. xiv. 34)—and those examples also, which are in scripture written for our admonition. Repeated promises of temporal prosperity are made to the Israelites, on condition of their obedience to the law of God, and adherence to his appointed worship; and calamities the most fearful are repeatedly denounced against them, in case they should prove disobedient, and especially in case of their departing from the worship of Jehovah into idolatry¹—while the exact fulfilment both of these promises and of these threatenings is recorded in the historical books of the Old Testament. The Israelites, indeed, were under a peculiar dispensation. But “these things² happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Cor. x. 11)—for our admonition as individuals, and for our admonition also as a nation, an admonition both to

¹ See particularly Deut. xxviii.

² The apostle had just been speaking of the sins of the Israelites while travelling in the wilderness, and the judgments inflicted on them in consequence thereof; but the same observation equally applies to *all* the dealings of God with them as recorded in Scripture—for the same apostle, in another epistle, says: “WHATSOEVER things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” (Rom. xv. 4.)

rulers and to subjects. Promises made to the Israelites *as a nation*, and woes denounced against them *as a nation*, blessings bestowed and judgments inflicted upon them *as a nation*, if ensamples at all, cannot but be ensamples to nations and their rulers.

The dealings of God with other nations, as well as with the Israelites, are recorded in Scripture. It was on account of the iniquity of the Amorites, that the Lord cast them out before the children of Israel. God gave not their land to Abram—for in his time “the iniquity of the Amorites” was “not yet full”—but God promised to give it to his descendants “in the fourth generation” after Israel should have gone into Egypt (Gen. xv. 16); and he did cast out the Amorites, who had done “very abominably in following idols” (1 Kings xxi. 26). It was, indeed, the determinate counsel of God to give the land of Canaan (of which the Amorites were a principal nation) to the seed of Abraham for a possession: but this He did in a way consistent with all His glorious attributes. He cast out the inhabitants of Canaan, because their iniquity was full. He gave them time for repentance, not casting them out, till their abominable idolatry and the wickedness connected with it was at its height: and then He at once inflicted just judgment upon them, and performed His promise to Abraham. In what glorious harmony do the faithfulness, justice, and long-suffering mercy of God shine together throughout the whole transaction!

2. If we would have good laws obeyed, the people

must be instructed in true religion, which both teaches uprightness, integrity, and honesty, and holds forth such motives to just dealing between man and man as are incomparably more constraining than prisons and scourges and scaffolds. This is too plain to need any proof: and so is my next remark.

3. If, where the people have a share or influence in the legislature, we would have good laws made, the people must be instructed in true religion, which alone gives wisdom to legislate in conformity with the will of God, and consequently for the maintenance of truth and justice.

III. The third proposition is the obvious conclusion from the other two—the conclusion at least, which those cannot fail to draw, who acknowledge Christianity as taught in the Bible to be the true, and the only true religion—and with such only I am now arguing. Yet there are those, who, some on one ground and some on another, deny the conclusion, while (at least in a general way, and in some sense or another) they admit the premises. The objections may be classed and answered as follows.

1. Some contend that the establishment of a national church in connection with the state¹ is not the

¹ Since this was written my attention has been called to the opinion of the late Dr. Arnold, that the State should be the Church, or (in other words) the church and state should be one society, rather than two allied societies. (See *Life of Dr. Arnold*, passim, and especially vol. ii. p. 142.) That the state should in every thing act on the principles of the gospel, I agree: but it seems to me another and widely different question, how this object is to be secured—a question involving many questions—

right mode of promoting Christian worship or Christian instruction. What other method they would have the ruler adopt, they do not tell us : and it is sufficient to meet this objection with the observation, that under the Mosaic dispensation God appointed this very plan of a ministry set apart for the purpose as the best plan for perpetuating among his chosen people the pure worship of himself and the knowledge of his will. This was, indeed, a peculiar dispensation ; and I therefore do not argue that all its peculiarities are to be followed by a Christian government, that conformity (for example) to the national worship should be enforced by temporal penalties ; but the establishment of the Levitical ministry furnishes the broad principle, that the best method, by which the worship of God and the knowledge both of his will and of the sanctions and motives by which it is enforced can be maintained in a nation, is a ministry set apart for the purpose and provided by law with a maintenance.

2. It is objected, that great difference of opinion prevails respecting the right form of Christian worship and the substance of Christian doctrine ; and that to compel an individual to pay for the support of a reli-

whether those who are set apart to minister in holy things should, and to what extent, and how, be allowed to interfere in the general legislature and government—whether to them alone should be entrusted all legislation affecting the church—whether there should be one legislature, and how composed, for church and state? These are questions left (as far as I see) undecided in Scripture, and which will probably not be solved till the “ kingdoms of this world ” “ become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.”

gion, to which he conscientiously objects, is a violation of the rights of conscience, and partakes of the nature of persecution. A satisfactory answer to this objection has been given, derived from our Lord's command to the Jews to pay tribute to Cæsar (Matt. xxii. 21). This he enjoined, though it was notorious that out of the imperial revenues, sums were paid for the support of idolatrous worship! and our Lord thereby established the principle, that it is the duty of the subject to pay whatever taxes are imposed by "the powers that be;" and that the responsibility of applying the money so raised rests, not with those who pay the taxes, but with the government. Where indeed, as in this free country, the people have either a share in or an influence over the government, it is not only lawful for an individual, but in general it is his duty, so to use the political power or influence with which he is intrusted as to prevent or check (so far as in him lies) any application, which he may judge wrong, of the public revenue—to prevent or check its being applied to support any false religion, or to carry on any unjust war, or to further any other wicked purpose. Doing this he discharges his own conscience from all responsibility as to the application of the public revenue; and, to whatever purpose it may be applied by those to whom the application belongs, he is (in obedience to the apostle's express command) bound to render "tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom." (Rom. xiii. 7.)

3. Others, while they admit that the ruler *should*

(or at least *may*) enforce the contributions of his subjects for the support of places of Christian worship and the maintenance of Christian ministers, contend that he has no authority to judge between different systems assuming the name of Christianity, but should allow each individual to choose among different denominations that to the support of which his contribution shall be applied. According to these objectors the ruler has authority to decide, that Christianity is the only true religion—the only religion, which as ruler he ought to support or countenance—and yet has no authority to judge which, among the various forms of religion calling themselves Christian, is the religion of Christ. On what principle this opinion can rest, it is not easy to discover. It overlooks the fact, that of these various forms of religion, though all bearing the name of Christian, some are so diametrically opposed to others that both cannot be true—one must be fundamentally erroneous : that, under the name and guise of Christianity, there exists a system of gross idolatry and superstition ; and another system also, which robs Christ of his glory and authority as one with the Father, and his gospel of its essential and distinguishing doctrines. Even in the apostle's days, there were those who preached “ another gospel which is not another ”—no gospel at all—and on whom St. Paul pronounced an anathema (Gal. i. 6—9). And we are expressly warned against “ false teachers,” “ who privily ” should “ bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them ” (2 Pet. ii. 1) ; against some

who, in the latter times, should “depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils,¹ speaking lies in hypocrisy.” (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.) If therefore the ruler draw no line of distinction between different systems bearing the name of Christianity, he will inevitably give his sanction and the support of the state not only to those ministers who preach the gospel which Paul preached, but to those also who preach “another gospel”—to “false teachers,” “who privily” “bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them”—to apostate priests, who preach for doctrines the commandments of men, give “heed to seducing spirits,” and superadd to the worship of God the worship of demons. No precautions, indeed, either on the part of the civil ruler or of the church can altogether prevent false teachers from creeping “unawares” into the ministry. But the intrusion of such ministers into a pure branch of Christ’s holy universal church is one thing; the national support of a religion, which (though called Christian) is Antichristian in doctrine, or idolatrous and superstitious in worship, is another. The sin, in the one case, rests with the intruder, except so far as it may sometimes be shared by the negligent ruler of the church; it rests, in the other case, with the civil government.

4. Others, while they admit that the ruler should establish a national religion, hold that it should be the

¹ Gr. δαιμονίων—of dæmons—demigods—deified men.

religion of the majority. Let us examine, whither this principle fairly carried out will lead us. If the majority of the nation be heathen or Mahomedan, the ruler, though by profession a Christian, must support (as the case may be) heathenism or Islamism. If the majority of the nation belong to the apostacy foretold by the apostle Paul (2 Thess. ii. 3), the ruler must support that apostacy, as the national religion, though the apostacy or its head be the “man of sin,” “the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,” “that Wicked . . . whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; *even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.” (2 Thess. ii. 3—10.) If the majority of the nation adhere to the Babylon of the Apocalypse (Rev. xvii.), the ruler must set up the religion of Babylon as that of the state, regardless of the warning voice from heaven — “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. xviii. 4.) To those who, calmly contemplating these consequences,¹ can still cling to the

¹ It has been clearly shown, by Protestant commentators, that the marks both of the apostacy foretold in the second epistle to the Thessalonians, and of the Babylon described in the Apocalypse, are the distinctive marks of the Papacy; but it is foreign to my present purpose to enter into this question. Whatever be the apostacy foretold by St. Paul, or the Babylon seen in vision by St. John, my argument is equally conclusive against the principle, in opposition to which I urge it.

principle that the ruler should support, as the national religion, that religion which the majority prefer—be it what it may, or at least if it be *nominally* Christian—it is useless to offer further argument.

5. Others object, that, if it is the duty of a Christian ruler to provide for the nation Christian instruction and the opportunities of Christian worship, it is equally the duty of a Mahomedan ruler to maintain Islamism, and of a heathen ruler to maintain polytheism and idolatry. And they imagine, that they have thus overthrown the principle of a national church by deducing from it an absurd consequence. But no such consequence can be deduced from it. It does not follow, that, because a Christian ruler does right when he supports the true religion of Jesus Christ as the national religion, a Mahomedan ruler therefore does right when he supports the religion of the false prophet, or a heathen ruler when he supports idolatry and polytheism. He, and he only, acts right, who both has a right rule of conduct and observes that rule; and the objection now under consideration rests on a tacit assumption of a false proposition. It assumes either that each man's conscience, whether well or ill informed, is a right rule to him, or that it matters not whether a man follow a right or a wrong rule, provided he think it a right rule. Lay aside the erroneous assumption, and the objection falls to the ground. The Christian ruler, who adopts the pure gospel of Christ for the national religion, does right, because he both has a right rule of conduct and observes it; while

neither the Mahomedan ruler supporting Islamism, nor the heathen ruler supporting idolatry and polytheism, acts right, because his rule of conduct is wrong, however strictly he may take it for his guide. Would then the Mahomedan or heathen ruler act right, if he established Christianity? Certainly not, so long as he did not believe in Christianity, for in so doing he would depart from the rule which (though erroneously) he believes to be right. His is the unhappy condition common to every one in respect of those things, concerning which his conscience is ill-informed. He does wrong, if in those things he acts according to his conscience,¹ because his conscience is in error: he does wrong if he acts against his conscience, because he violates what he believes to be the right rule.

I enter not into the many questions which arise out of the connection between church and state, and are involved in the establishment of a national church—such as—the relation in which a church so established stands to the state—the extent to which the state may be entitled to interfere in the appointment of ministers to offices or stations in the church—the extent to which the state may be entitled to controul the dis-

¹ Paul “ verily thought with” himself that he “ ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth;” and so thinking he persecuted the disciples. But in this he (after his conversion) speaks of himself as having been “ a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,” who “ obtained mercy because” he “ did *it* ignorantly in unbelief:” and he adds, “ that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” (Acts xxvi. 9—11 and 1 Tim. i. 13, 15.) He needed, and obtained, mercy for the sin.

cipline, canons, legislation, and judicature of the church—the nature and (if any) the limits of religious toleration. On these and similar questions, as affecting a Christian government, nothing can be found in Scripture beyond such general principles as I have already noticed.

It is, however, necessary to observe, that those general principles do not authorize a Christian government to impose on any one conformity to the national church,¹ or to attach to excommunication any civil consequences²—still less do they authorise the church, or any individual, to withhold from the excommunicated person the common offices of humanity.³ I think non-

¹ Our Lord declared: “My kingdom is not of this world” (John xviii. 36): and his apostle Paul: “The weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal.” (2 Cor. x. 4.) A time, indeed, is foretold when “the kingdoms of this world” will “become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ” (Rev. xi. 15): but conformity to the gospel of Christ will then be voluntary, not constrained.

² Formerly excommunication by our spiritual courts not only disabled the party from suing in the temporal courts, but subjected him to imprisonment under a writ “*de excommunicato capiendo*”—a practice derived (I conceive) from popish times: but by the act of 53 Geo. III. cap. 127, it has been stripped of all its civil consequences except such imprisonment (not exceeding six months) as the spiritual court shall award: and I conceive the court would not inflict this penalty, except to enforce compensation for a temporal injury involved in the ecclesiastical offence. It may deserve consideration from the legislature, whether some further alteration should not be made.

³ To this day, in those parts of Ireland where popery predominates, if a man be excommunicated and “cursed from the altar” by the priest, his infatuated neighbours (even if they abstain from personal violence) withhold from him, not only the charities of Christian brotherhood, but all the offices of common humanity; withdraw from all intercourse with him; refuse to “buy or sell” of him or to him; and by this persecution

conformity should not be treated as an offence: but I must guard myself against being misunderstood, by adding, first, that while I express no opinion on the expediency of excluding from political or official power, either nonconformists in general, or those who hold particular doctrines, I do not consider such exclusion as a penalty in the proper sense of the word: and secondly, that I think it is the duty of every government, to repress the *teaching* of such doctrines as are clearly subversive of morality, and tend to dissolve the bonds of society.

often compel him to quit his parish and sometimes his native land. Can this be the religion of the "Prince of Peace?" of Him who said: "If thy brother will not "hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican"—not as an enemy, an outcast from society? Or is it the apostacy foretold, Rev. xiii. 17?

PART II.

THE EVIDENCE

RESPECTING

THE ALLEGED “FACT”

OF APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION

EXAMINED.

APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

CHAPTER I.

THE QUESTION GENERALLY CONSIDERED AND STATED.

IN the first number of the Tracts for the Times, entitled “Thoughts on the Ministerial Commission, respectfully addressed to the Clergy,” the writer—“a Presbyter”—thus expresses himself.

“I fear we have neglected the real ground on which our authority is built,—OUR APOSTOLICAL DESCENT. We have been born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.¹ The Lord JESUS CHRIST gave his Spirit to his Apostles; they in turn laid their hands on those who should succeed them; and these again on others; and so the sacred gift has been handed down to our present bishops, who

¹ This is another instance, in which the writers of the Tracts tacitly, if not expressly, appropriate to ordained ministers texts belonging to every true Christian. See John i. 12, 13.

have appointed us as their assistants, and in some sense representatives."

In other words—our Lord gave his Spirit to his apostles: they in turn laid their hands on, and thereby transmitted the same sacred gift to, others who should succeed them; and these again to others: and so the sacred gift, which our Lord gave to his disciples, has been transmitted to our present bishops, who have appointed the presbyters to assist them in some parts of their sacred office.

Such is the doctrine. Now how much of this can we deduce from scripture?

1. Our Lord *breathed* on his apostles, and gave them his Holy Spirit, in his miraculous powers, in his infallible guidance, in his sanctifying grace, thereby qualifying them for the due execution of the apostolic office, and the right exercise of the apostolic authority, which he had previously conferred upon them. But on no occasion is he recorded to have laid his hands upon them.

2. The apostles laid their hands on many individuals, healing some, conferring supernatural gifts on others, setting others apart to the office of deacon or elder or evangelist: but it is *not* recorded in scripture, that they laid their hands on any one individual *who should succeed them*; or that they transmitted, or intended to transmit, to any others the same apostolical office, or the same apostolical authority, or *the same sacred gift*, which our Lord had conferred on themselves. When they conferred on any other individual any super-

natural gift, it was without giving him any power of transmitting it further : and when they conferred on others any office or authority, it was an office or authority inferior and subordinate to their own.

3. The presbytery joined with the apostle Paul in laying hands on Timothy : and Barnabas joined with the same apostle in ordaining elders in various cities. Timothy again laid hands on others, and so did Titus : but this each of them did, *not as a successor, but as an assistant*, to the apostle. Timothy was exhorted “not” to “neglect,” but to “stir up, the gift” which was in him by the laying on of the hands both of the *apostle* and of the *presbytery* : but we find no direction given to him to hand down this gift to another.

Such is the result of the inquiry prosecuted in the former part of this work : and it is at once obvious how far the evidence of scripture falls short of the statement in the Tract. The question therefore arises—Is evidence from any other quarter admissible to supply the deficiency ? to show, that the apostles laid their hands “on those who should succeed them,” and *so handed down* to them the same apostolical office, the same apostolical authority, or *the same sacred gift* which our Lord had conferred on the apostles ?

The question is anticipated in the Tract¹ entitled “The Grounds of our Faith.” The writer supposes an objector to say—“but after all, *there is very little about episcopacy in Scripture*”—and, in the course

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 45.

of discussing this objection, observes : “ Let us suppose, *for the sake of argument*, that Episcopacy is in fact not at all mentioned in Scripture : even then it would be our duty to receive it. Why ? Because the first Christians received it.” If this be a satisfactory reason, it would follow, that *it is our duty to receive whatever the first Christians received*.

Let us pause for a moment, and consider whither this extraordinary principle would lead us. It would impose on every Christian the duty, not of studying “ the Holy Scriptures which are able to make ” him “ wise unto salvation,” but of becoming acquainted with the ecclesiastical history of the early church ; and, as this is wholly out of the power of the great bulk of the laity, they must take that history on the credit of the clergy, or rather of the few among them who have made themselves acquainted with the subject ! Nor is this all. When, scripture being silent, we have ascertained by laborious inquiry what institutions the first Christians received, we are to receive the same institutions without regard to difference of circumstances. Whether we live in a torrid or temperate or frigid zone, whether under a heathen or Christian government, whether under an absolute despotism or a wild democracy or a free and mixed constitution, whatever be our customs and manners, our greater or less advance in civilization and arts and science and literature, still all churches must for ever and every where have the same institutions !

But what I am more concerned to notice is the mis-

chievous and unscriptural doctrine advanced in support of this proposition. The writer of the Tract anticipates, as well he may, an objection, and endeavours to meet it.

“ It may be urged, that we Protestants believe the *Scriptures* to contain the whole rule of duty. Certainly not; they constitute a rule of *faith*, not a rule of *practice*; a rule of *doctrine*, not a rule of *conduct* or *discipline*.”

Let us now contrast this teaching with that of St. Paul. “ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be PERFECT, THOROUGHLY FURNISHED UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS.”¹ The apostle clearly teaches us that the scriptures contain a complete rule of duty—a rule of *practice* as well as of *faith*. To teach otherwise is in effect to set aside the authority of scripture, and to teach for “ doctrines the commandments of men:” and those who so teach—“ in vain do they worship ” God.² For if scripture do not contain in every respect a complete rule of duty, we must learn our duty from the commands, or impositions, or practices, of men.

But, by way of *exemplifying* the insufficiency of scripture, the writer proceeds—“ Where (*e. g.*) are we told in Scripture that gambling is wrong? or again suicide?” It is truly painful to find such questions

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

² Mark vii. 7.

proposed by men of learning and professing the gospel. The second question any well-taught child would answer by—"Thou shalt not kill:" and as to the question, "Where are we told in scripture that gambling is wrong?"—it may be answered by another—Can the gambler say: "Whether" I "eat or drink," whether I throw the dice or shuffle the cards, whether in the twinkling of an eye I plunge myself or my friend into utter destitution, or "whatsoever" I "do," I "do all to the glory of God"¹? When the gambler strips his neighbour of his estate without cause and without equivalent, does he love his neighbour as himself?² Does he—can he—do this "in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him"³?

But the climax of the writer's argument still remains. He proceeds—

"Our Article is precise: 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, &c., is not to be required of any man, that it should be *believed* as an article of *faith*.'"

Indeed our Article⁴ is precise, rather *too* precise, *when fairly quoted*, for the anti-scriptural doctrine attempted to be deduced from it. The reader shall judge for himself.

"Holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, *nor*

¹ 1 Cor. x. 31.

² Matt. xxii. 39.

³ Col. iii. 17.

⁴ Article vi.

may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, *or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.*"

Of the two clauses printed in italics the latter is wholly omitted in the Tract; and for the former an &c. is substituted. The first, if inserted at length, would have answered the questions respecting gambling and suicide. The last clause, as contradistinguished from its alternative ("that it should be *believed* as an article of the *faith*"), proves that our Reformers held scripture to be a rule of *practice* as well as of *faith*—in other words, to contain a *complete rule of duty*.

I come back, then, to the question, whether, if the doctrine of apostolical succession, as being "the real ground on which" ministers' "authority is built," is "not read" in scripture, "nor may be proved thereby," it can be legitimately established by other evidence: and the answer clearly is—No!

I have examined this question fully, for two reasons.

First—I thought it important, to refute at once the unscriptural position, that the scriptures "do not contain the whole rule of duty"—a position, which, once admitted, necessarily leads to the substitution of men's commandments for the word of God, hands over each layman's conscience to the dictation of the priest, and ultimately conducts to the apostacy of Rome.

Secondly—I was unwilling to enter into an examination of the historical evidence respecting the alleged "apostolical descent" of the episcopal clergy of the

present day, or (as it is called in another Tract) “ the *fact* of the apostolical succession,” without first showing that such historical evidence, even if it established the *fact* beyond all controversy, would not (scripture being silent) prove the *doctrine*.

This alleged “ *fact* ” is perhaps most distinctly stated, and its application to the *doctrine* of apostolical succession most fully brought forward, in the Tract¹ entitled : “ The Episcopal Church Apostolical.” The “ position ” laid down by the writer of that Tract is this—

“ That the Apostles appointed successors to their ministerial office, and so on to the present day ;—and further, that the Apostles and their Successors have in every age committed portions of their power and authority to others, who thus become their delegates, and in a measure their representatives, and are called Priests and Deacons.”

Then (tacitly taking it for granted that the power of ordination was never committed to the priests) he argues, that “ the Presbyterian Ministers have assumed a power which was never entrusted to them. They have presumed to exercise the power of ordination, and to perpetuate a succession of ministers, without having received a commission to do so. . . . If *they* may ordain without being set to do so, others may teach and preach without being sent. . . . If an imposition of hands is necessary to convey one gift, why should it not be to

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 7.

convey another ? ” This argument obviously *assumes* that a *transmitted* commission is necessary in both cases ; and it falls to the ground, if I have correctly deduced from scripture¹ that the authority to ordain belongs to *the supreme rulers of the church for the time being, as such*. At all events, the *necessity* for such transmission should have been proved from scripture ; which it has not been.

The writer then proceeds—

“ 1. As to the *fact* of the Apostolical Succession, i. e. that our present Bishops are the heirs and representatives of the Apostles by successive transmission of the prerogative of being so, this is too notorious to require proof. Every link in the chain is known, from St. Peter to our present Metropolitans. Here then I only ask, looking at this plain fact by itself, is there not something of a divine providence in it ? Can we conceive that this Succession has been preserved, all over the world, amid revolutions, through many centuries, *for nothing* ? Is it wise or pious to despise or neglect a gift thus transmitted to us in matter of fact, even if Scripture did not touch upon the subject ?

“ 2. Next consider how *natural* is the doctrine of a Succession. . . .

“ 3. Lastly, the *argument from Scripture* is surely quite clear enough to those, who honestly wish direction for *practice*. . . .”

Thus three grounds are taken : 1st. The alleged

¹ See part. i. ch. vii.

“fact;” 2ndly. The consideration, “How natural is the doctrine of a succession;” and, 3dly. The argument from scripture. The examination of evidence relating to the alleged “fact” is the subject proposed in this part of the work. The argument from scripture is in this Tract ¹ made to rest solely on one passage—Matt. xxviii. 19, 20—this and all the principal passages bearing on the question have been examined; and they have been shown ² not to establish the doctrine of apostolical succession, as taught in the Tracts for the Times. And, if a commission derived in succession from the apostles cannot from scripture be proved to be essential to the lawful and effectual exercise of the Christian ministry, then the consideration—“How natural is the doctrine of succession,” or “the fact” (if it exist) “of the apostolical succession”—is nothing to the purpose. Yet with many the argument will have weight.

As to the doctrine of a succession being *natural*, the case is thus put—“When an individual comes to me, claiming to speak in the name of the Most High, it is natural to ask him for his authority. If he replies, that we are all bound to instruct each other, this reply is intelligible; but in the very form of it excludes the notion of a ministerial order, i. e. a class of persons set apart *from* others for religious offices. If he appeals to some miraculous gift, this too is intelligible,

¹ Other passages are quoted in other Tracts of the same series: but the principal (if not all) of these have been examined in part i. ch. viii.

² Part i. ch. viii.

and only unsatisfactory when the alleged gift is proved to be a fiction. No other answer can be given, except a reference to some person, who has given him license to exercise ministerial functions; then follows the question, *how* that individual gained his authority to do so. In the case of the Catholic Church, the person referred to, i. e. the Bishop, has received it from a predecessor, and he from another, and so on, till we arrive at the Apostles themselves, and thence our LORD and SAVIOUR. It is superfluous to dwell on so plain a principle, which in matters of this world we act upon daily." (Tracts for the Times, No. vii. p. 3.)

Now in this short argument there is scarcely a sentence that will bear examination. "When an individual comes to me, claiming to speak in the name of the Most High," *and to announce some new revelation of his will*, it is, indeed, "natural to ask him for his authority;" it is the only course consistent with common sense: and, *in such a case*, no answer will be satisfactory, but an appeal to some miraculous gift, and even that appeal will be "unsatisfactory" *not only* "when the alleged gift is proved to be a fiction," but until it proves itself or is *clearly proved to be a reality*. But, "when an individual comes to me, claiming to speak in the name of the Most High," *as the minister of a revelation the inspired record of which I hold in my hand*,—and this is now the actual state of the case—then my only *natural*, my *only rational*, course is to refer to that record, and examine whether it sanctions the individual's claim to ministe-

rial authority. We are brought back therefore to scripture: and, as we do not there find the doctrine of apostolical succession, the reply of the claimant as founded upon it is unsatisfactory.

But we are told that the *principle* of tracing back the minister's commission through a series of bishops to the apostles themselves, and thence to our LORD and SAVIOUR, is a "plain" "principle, which in matters of this world we act upon daily." This I deny. When the sovereign on the throne claims our obedience, we do not feel it necessary to trace back his genealogy through centuries past, and to inquire whether he is the legitimate successor to the first sovereign who ruled the country. We should be in a strange position indeed, if every one withheld his allegiance till he could thus satisfy himself of the legitimacy of the sovereign's title. Nor would the great body of Christians be in a less perplexing position, if the minister's authority and the validity of his ministrations depended on his having been ordained by a bishop, who had received his authority to ordain "from a predecessor, and he from another, and so on, till we arrive at the apostles themselves, and thence our LORD and SAVIOUR." When an individual, "who comes to me claiming to speak in the name of the Most High," tells me that a licence to exercise the ministerial functions has been given to him by the bishop, who has received authority so to do "from a predecessor,¹ and he from

¹ This strange expression, "*a* predecessor," must not be passed by unnoticed. Had the writer said in plain terms "*his* predecessor," it

another, and so on, till we arrive at the apostles themselves, and thence our LORD and SAVIOUR ;” am I to take all this statement upon the credit of the individual himself who makes it ? If so, I may as well receive him at once as a minister on his own word, without asking for his authority. Am I then to satisfy myself by *other* evidence that he was ordained by a bishop, who can trace his authority through bishops back to an apostle ? That were an inquiry impracticable to all professing Christians, except perhaps one in a million. But the writer tells us, that the “*fact* of the apostolical succession, i. e. that our present bishops are the heirs and representatives of the apostles by successive transmission of the prerogative of being so” “is too notorious to require proof.” This is an easy mode of establishing what we desire to have received as a fact : and many will receive it, with whom boldness of assertion supplies the place of proof. Yet we are clearly entitled to call for *evidence* of the alleged “fact of the apostolical succession.”

Before, however, I enter into the examination of evidence on that question, it may be proper to con-

would have occurred to every one, that no bishop of the present day has received his authority from *his* predecessor, the bishop by whose death the see had become vacant. In what sense, I would ask, when a bishop of London elect is consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury and two other bishops, can he be said to receive his episcopal authority from “*a* predecessor ?” In what sense is any one of the consecrating bishops “*a* predecessor” to the bishop consecrated ? But some such phraseology was necessary to give some colour to the analogy between a succession of bishops and a succession of hereditary sovereigns. An argument cannot be worth much which requires such a misapplication of terms.

sider what other answer, than an appeal to apostolical succession, a minister of the gospel can give, when interrogated respecting his authority. He may give this answer—"Here is the Bible, the word of God himself,¹ the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Examine what directions are there given respecting the appointment of ministers, and what doctrine they are required to teach. See whether my appointment has been made in conformity with those directions: compare my teaching with the doctrine therein contained: and examine by these tests whether or not I am a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ." This test of scriptural doctrine may not suit those ministers, however regularly ordained, who "pervert the Gospel of Christ;"² who add to, or take from, the word of God; who make it void by their traditions; who "preach another gospel" than that which Paul preached, "which is not another"—but it is the only test, by which in these latter times Christians can detect the false pretences of him, "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders"³—for he too appeals to apostolical succession, and claims obedience as sitting in the chair of St. Peter—it is the only test, by which we can distinguish the "false teachers" foretold by St. Peter,⁴

¹ I assume (as the writer of Tract 7 must by his answer to the question assume) that the inquirer is a professing Christian, who receives the Bible as the word of God. How the question should be answered, when proposed by an avowed unbeliever, is another consideration. The answer given in the Tract will not, in such a case, suffice.

² Gal. i. 7.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 9.

⁴ 2 Pet. ii. 1.

and (as directed by St. John) "try the spirits whether they are of God."¹

I now proceed to examine the alleged "fact of the Apostolical Succession, i. e. that our present Bishops are the heirs and representatives of the Apostles by successive transmission of the prerogative of being so." We are told, not only that "every link of the chain is known from St. Peter to our present Metropolitans ;" but "that this Succession has been preserved, all over the world, amid many revolutions, through many centuries ;"² that "it is only the Bishops, who have ever been called by the title of successors" [to the apostles] "and that there has been actually a perpetual succession of these Bishops in the Church, who alone were always esteemed to have the power of sending other Ministers to preach and administer the Sacraments."³

The alleged "*fact*," then, "of the apostolical succession" (as taught in the Tracts for the Times) comprises in effect two distinct propositions :

First : There has, from the time of the apostles, been a succession of bishops, an order of ministers distinguished from presbyters and deacons, and exercising as such the exclusive authority of ordaining other ministers.

Secondly : This exclusive authority has from the first been conferred on each bishop by some other bishop, to whom it had previously been transmitted

¹ 1 John iv. 1.

² Tracts for the Times, No. 7. The whole passage has been already quoted in this chapter.

³ Tracts for the Times, No. 15, p. 2.

from an apostle either immediately or through a series of bishops: and the authority has *in each case* been conferred by a new imposition of episcopal hands distinct from any previous ordination which the individual may receive to the office of deacon or presbyter.

It is important to keep both these propositions in mind. Unless *both* be proved, the alleged "*fact* of the apostolical succession" is not established in evidence. It is not established by merely proving (if it can be proved) that there has been always in the church a threefold ministry—in each church a bishop, presbyters, and deacons; and that by the bishop alone the right to ordain was for many centuries exercised. If it be not further proved, that a presbyter, though regularly and canonically elected or nominated to the office of bishop over a local church, always received a new ordination from some other bishop, before he took upon himself the episcopal office and proceeded to ordain other ministers,¹ the alleged "*fact* of the apostolical succession" remains destitute of evidence: while, even were the "*fact*" proved beyond all possibility of doubt, the *doctrine* and the consequences deduced from the doctrine would still (as we have seen) not be thereby established.

Bearing in mind these observations, let us now inquire, what evidence we can discover in the early fathers respecting the alleged *fact*.

¹ That a bishop *elect* has no such authority till consecration, is a necessary consequence of the doctrine of succession, and is accordingly assumed in the Tracts for the Times, No. 5. See particularly pp. 12, 13.

CHAPTER II.

THE APOSTOLICAL FATHERS.

THE earliest writings, not inspired, left us by fathers of the Church, are those of the fathers called apostolical, as having known one or more of the apostles : and of these fathers the principal are Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp.

Clement, the “ fellow-labourer ” of St. Paul (Philip. iv. 3), is stated to have been the writer of the epistle¹ addressed by the church of Rome to the church of Corinth : and there seems no ground to question the statement, though his name is not mentioned in the epistle. But, for reasons to be mentioned hereafter, I think he was not, when he wrote it, bishop of Rome.

¹ I refer exclusively to the epistle of which Archbishop Wake has given a translation in the *first* part of his “ Genuine Writings of the Apostolic Fathers.” There is a *second* epistle (apparently of less authenticity) which he relegates to the *second* part of the same work.

It appears, from internal evidence, to have been written after the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, and before the destruction of Jerusalem: for it mentions their martyrdom (sect. 5); and makes allusion to the temple-services as if still subsisting (sect. 41).

The tone of the letter is throughout that of one independent church to another, and clearly proves that no primacy was claimed by Rome for some years at least after the death of the apostle as whose successor the pope now claims it. The epistle contains not a single allusion to any bishop either of Rome or of Corinth: and thence arises a doubt, whether there was at that time a bishop of either church. So far as concerns the church of Rome, the question will better be considered when we have had before us other circumstances bearing upon it: but the epistle itself will, upon examination, sufficiently confirm the doubt in respect of the Corinthian church.

The Corinthians had “put out some who lived reputably among” them “from the ministry” (sect. 44); and had “revolted against the elders”¹ (sect. 47); and one great object of this epistle, as appears on the face of it, was to put an end to this dissension (sect. 48). Now, if there had been at this time a bishop of Corinth ordained to the episcopate by an apostle or by a bishop so ordained, what arguments would Clement have addressed, what advice would he have given, to the church of Corinth? Surely he would have re-

¹ Gr. *στασιάζειν πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους*—“be led into a sedition against its priests.” (Wake.)

mind the Corinthians, that their elders derived their authority, not from the Corinthians themselves, but from the apostles through their bishop, and therefore could not be deposed without the bishop's authority. Surely Clement would have urged on the Corinthians the duty of following and obeying their ministers till so deposed. But Clement makes not the most distant allusion to any ecclesiastical ruler superior to the deposed elders, or to any one among the elders as having authority over the others: nor could we from this epistle alone discover, that there then were any ministers in any Christian church except elders—called in the epistle sometimes elders, sometimes overseers (or bishops)—and deacons.

The course which Clement takes in reference to the dissension is this. He tells the Corinthians how the apostles provided ministers for the churches, which they gathered from among the heathen. Jesus Christ (he says) “was sent by God, the apostles by Christ; so both things were done in good order,¹ according to the will of God. For having received their commands, and being thoroughly assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and convinced by the word of God, with the fulness of the Holy Spirit, they went abroad, publishing that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus, preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits of their conversion to be overseers and ministers of such as should

¹ “So both things were done in good order,” ἐγέναντο οὖν ἀμφοτέρα εὐτάκτως. “So both were orderly sent.” (Archbishop Wake.)

afterwards believe,¹ having first proved them by the Spirit (sect. 42).

In this passage only two orders are mentioned—overseers and ministers—or (as the Greek words have long since been Anglicised) bishops and deacons, the same two orders as are mentioned by St. Paul, when he addresses his epistle to the “saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. i. 1.)—the pastors (that is to say) who fed and watched over the flock, and the ministers who served; the former order (as we have seen)² being in the Acts of the Apostles and in the epistles of St. Paul called interchangeably overseers and elders. Thus far this epistle, as regards the different orders of ministers, concurs with the inference deduced³ from those portions of the New Testament, which (like this epistle) were written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem; the Apocalypse (in which we discovered⁴ another class of ministers, “the angels of the churches”) having been written after that event. But I am unable to trace in scripture any appointment, by way of anticipation, of “bishops and ministers over such as *should afterwards believe*.” The practice of the apostles, as far as it can be deduced from scripture, was to appoint elders, and sometimes deacons also, for those who *already believed*; and thus to form them into a Chris-

¹ “Overseers and ministers of such as should afterwards believe,” ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν. “Bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe.” (Archbishop Wake.)

² Part i. ch. vi.

³ Part i. ch. vi. and vii.

⁴ Part i. ch. vi.

tian church or congregation: and, in making these appointments, they chose the individuals (as Clement truly says) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

After laying this foundation, Clement quotes the scripture¹ as saying: "I will appoint their overseers in righteousness, and their ministers in faith:" refers to the manner in which Moses (that "there might be no division in Israel," or "emulation" "among the tribes concerning the priesthood") proceeded to the appointment by lot of the tribe of Aaron (sect. 42, 43); and then enters directly on the case of the deposed ministers. "And our apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be a strife for the overseership.² Wherefore having a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those who are before mentioned, and then gave direction,³ how, when they should die, other approved men should receive in turn their office. We cannot, therefore, think that those have been justly cast out of their office, who were appointed by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, the whole

¹ The reference seems to be to Isa. lx. 17, which in our authorized version stands thus: "I will make also thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness." It is unnecessary to comment on Clement's application of the passage.

² Gr. ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς—literally, "upon the name of the overseership" or "episcopate." The meaning seems to be "a contention for the name or office of overseer or bishop:" and accordingly in the Tracts for the Times the words are rendered "for the episcopate." (No. 3, p. 8).

³ Gr. ἐπινομήν—which Wake renders "direction," and the writer of the Tract for the Times, No. 3, "an orderly succession"—on what ground I know not.

church consenting, and who ministered unblameably to the flock of Christ with humility, quietly, and disinterestedly, and were for a long time commended by all. For it will be no small sin in us, if we cast those out of their overseership, who have unblameably and holily fulfilled the duties of it.¹ Blessed are the elders, who, having finished their course already, have obtained a fruitful and perfect discharge: for they have no fear lest any one should turn them out of the place appointed for them. For we see that you have removed some, who conduct themselves well, from the office which they have adorned by their irreproachable behaviour.”²

In this passage there is no reference to any bishop of Corinth; no direction to submit to him the matters in controversy between the Corinthians and their deposed elders; no complaint that the bishop had not been consulted as to their deposition. The words *office* and *overseership* (or episcopate) are used interchangeably for the office of those whom the Corinthians had deposed; viz. the “elders” against whom, as we have seen, the Corinthians had revolted (Sect. 47). Those ministers, therefore, were such as in Acts (xx. 17, 28) are called interchangeably “elders” and “overseers.” Nor is there any allusion in the epistle to any minister of higher rank. The conclusion is inevitable, that, at this time, there was no bishop of Corinth, as distinguished from the elders; that St. Paul, who founded the church of Corinth, never introduced into

¹ “Fulfilled the duties of it,” προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα—literally, “offered the gifts.”

² See Appendix iv.

it the threefold distinction of bishop, presbyters, and deacons.

But the *first part* of the passage, as far as the words "in turn their office," has been quoted in the Tracts for the Times,¹ as the "testimony of St. Clement, the associate of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3) to the apostolical succession." The writer has (1.) omitted the rest of the passage, from which it would have appeared that the "oversership" (or "episcopate"), of which Clement writes, is the office of *an elder, not of a bishop as distinguished from a presbyter*. And (2.) the writer of the Tract has not informed his readers, that the ministers, whose appointment by the apostles Clement had previously mentioned, were "overseers and deacons"² (ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους), no distinction being drawn between bishops (or overseers), and elders.

The passage, therefore, even if we knew what the "direction" was of which Clement speaks as given by the apostles, would bear no testimony in favour of apostolical succession as transmitted exclusively through bishops, in contradistinction to elders. But the direction is not handed down to us. Nor are we informed who were the "eminent men, by whom some of the ejected ministers had been appointed, or how vacancies were to be supplied among the "eminent men," or whether the consent "of the whole church" was necessary to their appointment of a minister. Two things, however, are clear. First, the direction, what-

¹ No. 3, p. 3.

² See § 42, which I have quoted, *antè*.

ever it was, is not recorded in scripture ; and therefore is not perpetually binding on the churches. Secondly : no one of these “ eminent men ” was bishop (in the modern sense of the word) of the church of Corinth, or had any authority over its elders : for we have not in this epistle the slightest intimation of any of these “ eminent men ” having concurred in the deposition of the elders, though the writer could not have passed it over in silence, if there had been such concurrence—nor is it mentioned as an aggravation of the sin of the Corinthian church, that they had deposed elders without their bishop’s sanction,—as unquestionably it would have been if such had been the fact.

On the whole, this epistle to the Corinthian church affords no evidence in favour of the alleged “ *fact* of apostolical succession : ” but, on the contrary, furnishes by implication strong evidence, that, at the time when it was written, the Corinthian church had several elders or overseers, but no ecclesiastical ruler *over those elders*—no *bishop*, in the modern sense of the word ; and consequently that the apostle Paul did not introduce the threefold ministry into all the churches which he founded.

The next writer after Clement among the apostolical Fathers is IGNATIUS. He was bishop of Antioch ; and was there apprehended in the course of Trajan’s persecution,¹ and carried to Rome, where he suffered. All his genuine epistles now extant (seven in number) were

¹ A.D. 107 (Waddington’s History of the Church, p. 7).

written during this journey, and are therefore later in date than any of the inspired writings.¹

Of these epistles, one is addressed to the Church of Rome, and is silent as to the constitution of that church. It contains no allusion to any minister of the church of Rome: but, as prudential reasons might restrain him from making any such allusion while the persecution was raging, I draw no inference from this circumstance.

Of the other six epistles of Ignatius, one is addressed to Polycarp, bishop of the church of Smyrna; the other five to the several churches respectively of Tralles, Magnesia, Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Smyrna—all situated in Asia—the three latter being Apocalyptic churches. It is clear from these epistles, that in *all these five churches* the threefold ministry then existed; whence a confirmation arises of the interpretation, which assigns to the “angels” of the Apocalyptic churches the rank of bishops as distinguished from presbyters. But in these epistles, though Ignatius applies to ministers in general, and especially to bishops, language such as the inspired writers do not apply to them, and ascribes to bishops authority such as the apostles did not claim for themselves, he is silent on the question of apostolical succession in the Tractarian sense. Some may be surprized at this statement, who have been carried away by his in-

¹ See Archbishop Wake's Preliminary Dissertation. I examine these epistles the more minutely, because translations of them are given in the Tracts for the Times.

flated language, and have not carefully examined his expressions.

The following passage will illustrate my statement. It is taken from his epistle to the church at Smyrna.

“But avoid divisions as the beginning of evils.¹ Follow your bishop, all of you, as Jesus Christ followed the Father; and the presbytery as ye would the apostles. Respect the deacons as ye would the commandment of God. Let no one do any of the things pertaining to the church separately from² the bishop. Let that be esteemed a well-ordered eucharist, which is administered either by the bishop, or by him to whom he has committed it. Wherever the bishop is, there let the body of believers be, even as wherever Christ Jesus is, there is the catholic church.³ Separately from the bishop it is lawful neither to baptize, nor to celebrate the communion:⁴ but whatever he judges right, that also is well-pleasing unto God, that all which is done be safe and firm” (Ep. ad Smyrn. sect. 8).

The first sentence of this passage clearly shows (and indeed it is obvious from the preceding part of the epistle) that the great object of Ignatius in exhorting the Smyrnæans to follow their bishop, was to prevent

¹ Jacobson includes these words in § 8. They are included in § 7 both by Wake and in the Records of the Church, No. vii.

² “Separately from”—so Wake. Gr. *χωρίς*—“Without” (Tracts for the Times, Records of the Church, No. vii.).

³ It may be well to observe what Ignatius’ notion was of the *Catholic Church*, namely, “Wherever Christ Jesus is.”

⁴ “To celebrate the Communion”—*ἀγάπην ποιεῖν*.

divisions in their church, and to preserve them from a fatal heresy¹ into which some of them had fallen. With this view he writes : “ Follow your bishop, all of you, as Jesus Christ followed the Father ”—separate not yourselves from your bishop, quit not the church which he governs. Such is his exhortation : but he rests it not on the alleged fact of *apostolical succession in the episcopal line*—for he adds—“ and the presbytery as ye would the apostles.”

Ignatius is writing, not of the source or origin of ministerial authority, but of gradations in rank and jurisdiction among ministers, placing first the bishop, then the elders, and last of all the deacons. He assigns, I admit, to the bishop absolute authority, as well as superiority of rank. But he does not rest on apostolical succession the bishop’s claim to this authority or to this rank ; he does not appeal to “ that warrant ” to which the writer of Tract No. 4 appeals on behalf of himself and other “ priests commissioned, successively, from heaven,” as marking them, “ *exclusively*, for GOD’S AMBASSADORS ”—the warrant of ordination, of *episcopal* ordination. He is altogether silent as to the mode in which the bishop of the church of Smyrna, its elders, and its deacons had been appointed or commissioned. These things, it may be said, were known to the Smyrnæans. Unquestionably it was known to them how their ministers had been

¹ He charges the heretics with asserting, that our Lord suffered only “ in appearance ” (§ 2, 4), and with abstaining from the Lord’s Supper, and from prayer (§ 7).

appointed: and on that account we have the more reason to conclude, that *if the mode of appointment* had marked them out “*exclusively* for GOD’S AMBASSADORS,” Ignatius would in support of his argument, have appealed to this “warrant.” But he does not appeal to it: and all we can infer from the passage is, that as nothing pertaining to the church was (*in his opinion*) to be done separately from the bishop, no *elder* or *deacon* was to be appointed without his concurrence. The rule (whatever be its authority) cannot apply to the appointment of a bishop on a vacancy; for, when the church is without a bishop, the concurrence of the bishop cannot be had: and the rule does not preclude a successor being appointed, whether by the elders, or by the whole church; nor does it require as essential to such appointment the concurrence of the bishop of another church.

The meaning of the whole passage will perhaps more clearly appear, if we inquire what we are to understand by the expression (which repeatedly occurs in Ignatius) *χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου*, “without,” or “separately from, the bishop.” “Separately from the bishop it is lawful neither to baptize, nor to celebrate the communion.” This cannot mean that it is not lawful for any one but the bishop, or that it is not lawful for any one in the bishop’s absence, to administer either sacrament: for Ignatius had just before said—“Let that be esteemed a well-ordered eucharist, which is administered either by the bishop or by him to whom he has committed it”—or (as Archbishop Wake renders the word) “has

given his consent." Ignatius is obviously speaking, not of the *validity* of the sacrament as a means of grace, but of the lawfulness or regularity of its administration. That all things might be "done decently and in order," whatever was done in the church—the administration especially of the sacraments, and *à fortiori* (*though Ignatius does not specify it*) the ordination of ministers—was to be done under the direction and sanction of the bishop. When he wrote, the diocese of each bishop was small: the Lord's supper would usually be administered by the bishop himself; and, when he could not be present, he commissioned (as I infer from the passage) an elder to administer it in his place. Such a practice would tend to preserve order and unity in the church; but it would not imply, that ministers, deriving a commission in succession from an apostle, had exclusively an authority to administer the Lord's supper. We can see good reason, why, in the time of Ignatius, the administration of both sacraments should be retained under the controul of the bishop, where the church had a bishop; that no unfit candidate might be admitted into the church by baptism,¹ and that a baptized member who had disgraced his profession might at once be excluded from

¹ This principle is adopted by our own church as to adult baptism—"When any such persons, as are of riper years, are to be baptized, timely notice shall be given to the bishop, or whom he shall appoint for that purpose, a week before at the least, by the parents, or some other discreet persons; that so due care may be taken for their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion." So the Rubric directs: but no one, I presume, would hold, that the bap-

the communion of the church. If this was the practice of the Asiatic churches when Ignatius wrote, the meaning of the whole passage is obvious. It may be thus paraphrased: "Avoid the schisms into which those heretics, who have separated from your bishop, would lead you. Adhere to your bishop, elders, and deacons. Let every thing that pertains to the church be done under the bishop's direction. Let there be no baptism, no Lord's supper administered, apart from him, without his sanction. Consider no eucharist as administered according to due order, which is not administered either by the bishop, or by some one whom he has authorized. Thus will you preserve unity among yourselves, and avoid the communion of heretics who divide the church."

Whether this be the precise meaning of the passage or not, one thing is clear—that, however high it exalts the bishop's authority, it furnishes no evidence of the alleged "*fact of apostolical succession.*" It does not prove, that bishops (as distinguished from presbyters) have always had exclusively power to ordain other ministers. It does not prove that every bishop, though already ordained presbyter, received a new and distinct ordination from some other bishop authorizing him to ordain others. It merely proves, that, in a church *having a bishop, presbyters, and deacons*, it is (*according to the opinion of Ignatius*) unlawful to ordain

tism would be invalid, however irregular it might be, if administered without such previous notice. Did Ignatius mean more than our Rubric, when he said it was not lawful to baptize separately from the bishop?

without the bishop's concurrence: and even this we infer merely from the general terms which he uses—for he does not mention ordination.

In other epistles Ignatius urges subjection, obedience, or reverence, sometimes to the bishop, presbyters, and deacons (Ep. to Polyc. sect. 6), sometimes to the bishop and presbyters (Ep. to Eph. sect. 2), sometimes to the bishop (Ep. to Magn. sect. 13). But, while in one epistle he represents the presbyters as being “in the place of the council of the apostles” (Ep. to Magn. sect. 6), and in another enjoins subjection and reverence to them “as to the apostles of Jesus Christ” (Ep. to Trall. sect. 2 and 3); he no where applies such language to the bishop, or speaks of bishops as successors or representatives of the apostles. Of the bishop he writes to the Magnesians in the same connection, as “presiding in the place of God” (Ep. to Magn. sect. 6). This distinction of language ascribes higher rank to the bishop than to the presbyters; but is such as Ignatius would not have used, if he had considered the bishop as the only successor of the apostles,¹ the only Christian minister through whom apostolical succession can be transmitted.

Nor indeed can I, in the epistles of Ignatius, discover any intimation as to the way in which ministers were in his time appointed, except the obscure passage in his epistle to the church of Smyrna which has been

¹ Yet we are told in the Tracts for the Times, that “it is only the Bishops who have ever been called by the title of Successors” to the apostles. (No. 15, p. 2.)

already examined : but I find one passage, which intimates, that (in his opinion) the essential thing is, not external designation by man, but a sending forth of the minister by God himself. The passage, to which I refer, is in the opening of his epistle to the church at Philadelphia.

“ Ignatius, which is also Theophorus, to the church of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, which is in Philadelphia of Asia, which has obtained mercy, and is established in godly concord, and rejoices continually in the passion of our Lord, and has in his resurrection been fully replenished with all mercy : which also I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, which is our eternal and abiding joy, especially if they be in unity with the bishop, and the presbyters and deacons who are with him, appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ ; whom he has settled according to his own will in firmness by his Holy Spirit : which bishop, I know, obtained that public ministry among you, not of himself, NEITHER BY MEN, nor out of vain-glory, but in the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. My soul esteems his mind towards God happy, knowing it to be fruitful in all virtue, and perfect.” (Ep. ad Philadelph.)

“ Deacons appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ ”—a bishop who obtained his ministry “ not of himself, neither by men ”—what are we to infer from these expressions ? The first expression, if consistent with the notion of a *transmitted* commission, by no means implies it : and the second expression, a bishop

not by men (an expression obviously borrowed from St. Paul's respecting himself¹) is scarcely to be reconciled with such a notion. It is also obvious, that the church which he thus addressed, with its bishop, elders, and deacons, was sound in the faith. Would Ignatius have so addressed a church whose bishop was unsound in doctrine?

It is important to bear this passage in mind, while we examine another passage in the same epistle.

“As many as are of God, and of Jesus Christ, these are with the bishop. And as many as shall with repentance return into the unity of the church, these also shall be of God, that they may live according to Jesus Christ. Be not deceived, brethren; whosoever followeth one that createth schism, he inheriteth not the kingdom of God; whosoever walketh in another doctrine,² he agrees not with the passion of Christ. Use your diligence therefore to partake of the same eucharist; for there is but one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ; and one cup in the unity of his blood; one altar, as also there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and the deacons, my fellow-servants; that so, whatsoever ye do, ye may do it according to the will of God.” (Ep. to Philadelph. sect. 3 and 4.) This passage expresses the opinion which Ignatius entertained of the danger of those who separated from the church

¹ Gal. i. 1.

² “In another doctrine”—*ἐν ἀλλοτρίας γνώμῃ*—“after any other opinion” (Wake)—“by another man’s opinion” (Rec. of the Church, No. x). See also Jacobson’s note.

which was then at Philadelphia; a church sound in doctrine, which had a bishop, presbyters, and deacons, and the mind of whose bishop Ignatius knew to be “fruitful in all virtue, and perfect.”

It further expresses the opinion of Ignatius, that there was *then* at Philadelphia only *that one church* (for the passage in his epistle to the Trallians next to be examined shews that by “altar” he means church); and that there was in that city no partaking of the Lord’s supper except in communion with that church. But the passage *does not import*, either that the bishop had received his commission by apostolical succession; or that, if he had fallen into erroneous doctrine, and the presbyters had on that account separated from him and held fast the faith, those who continued in communion with the presbyters would not, in his opinion, have constituted a church, or could not truly have received the Lord’s supper at the hands of those presbyters. On the contrary, in the same epistle, Ignatius had (as has been already noticed) told the Philadelphians that their bishop had not obtained his ministry “by men:” and in a subsequent passage he writes: “If any one shall expound Judaism unto you, hearken not unto him; for it is better to receive the doctrine of Christ from one that has been circumcised, than Judaism from one that has not. But if either the one or the other do not speak concerning Christ Jesus, they are unto me, but as monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of men,” (ib. 6)—a passage in which Ignatius clearly

considers the doctrine taught as the test of the true minister.

Similar observations may be made on the following passage, from which also it is evident that by "one altar," Ignatius means *one church*. "He that is within the altar is pure; [but he that is without,] that is, he that does any thing independently of the bishop and presbytery and deacon, is not pure in his conscience:" (Ep. to Trall. sect. 7). Ignatius addressed this church at Tralles also, as "beloved of God the Father of Jesus Christ," "elect and worthy of God, having peace through the flesh and blood and passion of Jesus Christ:" and, immediately before the passage just cited, he had warned the Trallians "to use none but the Christian nourishment, and to abstain from the strange herb, which is heresy." (sect. 6.)

In this same epistle to the Trallians a passage occurs which, though I suspect it to be spurious,¹ I will not pass unnoticed. "Let all reverence the deacons, as Jesus Christ; as also the bishop, being the son of the Father; and the presbyters, as the council of God, and the college of the apostles [or, a college of apostles]. Apart from these a church is not called [or, it is not called a church]." (Sect. 3). Such is as literal a translation, as I am able to give, of a passage obviously corrupt. In substance Ignatius says, or is made to say, that a body of professing Christians, apart from the bishop, elders, and deacons, is not properly called a

¹ See the original and some remarks upon it in Appendix v.

church: an observation, which he might naturally make with reference to the heretics, against whom he afterwards warns the Trallians (sect. 6 and 7). But, even if he meant generally that the threefold ministry is essential to the constitution of a Christian church, we have only the *opinion* of Ignatius, even admitting the passage to be genuine; an opinion also not involving the doctrine of apostolical succession, it being obvious that the threefold ministry may exist and be perpetuated, though a presbyter on being raised to the rank of bishop receive no imposition of episcopal hands.

I am not aware, that I have omitted any passage¹ in Ignatius bearing on the alleged “fact of apostolical succession:” and I think I may conclude with confidence, that he gives no testimony in support of it.

Shortly after and almost contemporaneously with the epistles of Ignatius, POLYCARP (then bishop of the church at Smyrna²) wrote an epistle to the church at Philippi. He writes in the name of himself and of “the presbyters that are with him;” but he does not style himself bishop. Of himself he speaks in terms, emphatically distinguishing between St. Paul and himself: and he refers to the epistle which the apostle had written to the Philippians, as that by reading which they might edify themselves in the faith.³ This epistle

¹ See Appendix vi., written since the text, in consequence of the appearance of Mr. Cureton's edition of a Syriac version of three of the Epistles of Ignatius.

² Euseb. Ecc. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 36.

³ The passage, though not bearing directly on the present question, is

of Polycarp contains not a single allusion to a bishop of Philippi. We find in it exhortations to the deacons, and to the elders respectively, touching their respective duties (sect. 5 and 6) : and he admonishes the Philippians to be "subject to the elders and deacons, as unto God and Christ" (sect. 5). Can we believe, that, if at this time there had been a bishop of Philippi, Polycarp would have passed him over without notice ? that, when he enjoined subjection to the elders and deacons, he would have said nothing of subjection to the bishop ? Again—he exhorts the elders to abstain from "unrighteous judgment ;" to be "not easy to believe any thing against any" (sect. 6) : yet he gives them no direction to consult their bishop in their judgments. Is it not manifest, that, when Polycarp wrote, the elders were the supreme rulers of the church at Philippi ?

From the whole tenor of this epistle I conclude, that the constitution of the church of Philippi was the same when Polycarp wrote, as when the apostle Paul

too important to be wholly omitted. "These things, my brethren, I have not taken the liberty of myself to write unto you concerning righteousness, but you yourselves before encouraged me to it ; for neither can I, nor any other such as I am, come up to the wisdom of the blessed and renowned Paul, who, being himself in person with you, did with all exactness and soundness teach the word of truth ; and, being gone from you, wrote an epistle to you ; into which, if you look, you will be able to edify yourselves in the faith that has been delivered unto you, which is the mother of us all" (§ 3). Here Polycarp refers to the apostle's teaching as "with all exactness and soundness," and to the apostle's epistle for edification in the faith, acknowledging himself and others such as he was to be unable to come up to the apostle's teaching ; not even hinting that the apostle's teaching required the church's explanation.

addressed his epistle “to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons”—the “bishops” (or overseers) of the apostle being the “elders” of Polycarp: and, consequently, that the threefold ministry was not introduced by St. Paul into all the churches which he founded, nor universally introduced even in the apostle John’s time.

The other writings, which Archbishop Wake considers (whether or not on sufficient grounds) as “genuine” writings of the apostolical fathers, contain no allusion either to the doctrine or to the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession.”

Let us, therefore, now sum up and bring together the conclusions deduced from the epistles of Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp.

The only passage in these epistles, in which any reference is made to *the mode of appointing ministers*, is in Clement, and is so vague and obscure as to throw no light whatsoever on the question of apostolic succession: while Ignatius, urging strongly in his several epistles to the *Asiatic* churches subjection to the *bishop, presbyters, and deacons*, and especially exalting the bishop’s authority, deals in general and extravagant declamation, never alludes to any apostolic commission as being transmitted to the bishop, and is altogether silent on the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession,” which (had it been a fact) must have been known to him, and would have furnished him with arguments for his purpose much stronger than any he uses.

So far, indeed, is Ignatius from representing the

bishops as the successors (and *the only successors*) of the apostles, that he applies no such terms to them, but represents the *elders* as being “in the place of the council of apostles :” while Polycarp is wholly silent as to apostolical succession.

Lastly. Though from the epistles of Ignatius to the three apocalyptic churches of Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Smyrna, and the two other Asiatic churches of Tralles and Magnesia, it is clear, that the threefold ministry then existed in those five churches : there arises from the epistles of Clement and Polycarp a strong (I might say, an irresistible) inference, that the threefold ministry was neither introduced by St. Paul into *all*¹ the churches founded by him, nor introduced universally till after the death of the apostle John.

How the conclusion so deduced from Clement and Polycarp bears on the question of apostolical succession may deserve further explanation. The introduction of the threefold ministry (even if it had been *universally* introduced) by the apostles into the different churches, would not *alone* (as I have already observed) prove the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession,” even as regards bishops appointed in the earliest times after the age of the apostles : but conversely, if the facts be (as we cannot but infer from Clement and Polycarp) that the apostle Paul founded the churches of Corinth and Philippi without appointing a bishop over either of them, and that when Polycarp wrote (after the martyrdom of

¹ There is no evidence in Scripture, that it was introduced by him into *any* church. As to the bishops of Rome, see post, ch. iv.

the apostles Peter and Paul, and the death of St. John) the church of Philippi was still without a bishop, these facts militate strongly against the view of apostolical succession as advocated in the Tracts for the Times. The churches of Corinth and Philippi were obviously (when these epistles respectively were written) independent churches. Clement (in the name of the church of Rome) writes to the church of Corinth, and Polycarp writes to that of Philippi, as to an independent church, offering advice, not claiming authority over them. If then these two¹ churches were settled by St. Paul without appointing over them any bishop, by whom but by elders had their ministers been ordained, when they no longer had the superintendence of an apostle? And if, in a church which had no bishop, the elders had authority to ordain, the notion of a divine commission, transmitted exclusively through a succession of bishops, falls to the ground. Nor is the exercise of this authority by the elders of a church *so constituted* at variance with the practice, which Ignatius enforces on *episcopal* churches, that nothing be done without the bishop.

On the whole, the apostolical fathers (the principal witnesses to whom the writers in the Tracts for the Times appeal) not only supply no evidence in support of the alleged "*fact* of apostolical succession," but furnish strong inferences against it.

¹ It will hereafter appear (see post, ch. iv.) that the church of Rome was in the same condition.

CHAPTER III.

JUSTIN MARTYR TO ORIGEN.

AFTER the apostolic fathers, follow Justin Martyr and Irenæus in the second century, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria about the close of the second and the beginning of the third century, and Origen, who flourished in the third century.

JUSTIN MARTYR throws no light on the question of apostolical succession. His principal work (his Apology) is addressed, not to Christians, but to heathen. He is (as we should therefore naturally expect) silent on the constitution of the church : but, in one passage, he describes the practice of the brethren in baptism, in the Lord's supper, and in their public worship on Sunday.¹ He does not mention by whom baptism was administered : but he speaks of the bread and the cup of wine and water, as blessed ² by the president

¹ " Sunday "—*ἡλίου ἡμέρα*.

² " Blessed "—*τὸ εὐχαριστηθέντος*.

of the brethren¹ and given by the deacons to those present; of the scriptures being read, and of an exhortation being delivered by the president, “when the reader has ceased.” (Ap. Lib. i. sect. 61—67, pp. 79—84.)

We have, in this passage, the president, the reader as distinguished from him, and the deacons. Probably by the “*president*” he meant the same minister as in the epistles of St. Paul is called sometimes presbyter or elder, and sometimes bishop or overseer, words which I do not find used by Justin. The president was clearly the *ruling*, or *chief* minister. But I build no argument against apostolic succession on the term so used by Justin: for it may fairly be said, that Justin adopted the word “president” as more intelligible to those whom he addressed, than “presbyter” or “overseer.” All that I deduce from the passage, and from the circumstance of Justin nowhere else mentioning either bishop or elder, is, that he furnishes *no evidence in favour* of the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession,” or even of the threefold ministry.

IRENÆUS, who was bishop of Lyons in the latter part of the second century,² wrote against the various heresies then prevalent in the church,—heresies begun principally by Valentinian, Marcion, Cerinthus, and Basilides. He charges the heretics with rejecting the authority of scripture, and with alleging “that the

¹ This officer he calls in the first instance ὁ προεσὼς τῶν ἀδελφῶν, and afterwards simply ὁ προεσὼς.

² About A.D. 178 (Waddington's History of the Church, p. 73).

truth cannot be found from it by those who are ignorant of tradition." "Truth" (he says) "according to them, is sometimes in Valentinian, sometimes in Marcion, sometimes in Cerinthus, and then in Basilides, . . . but when we again appeal to the tradition, which is from the apostles, and is preserved in the churches by the successions of presbyters; they oppose tradition, saying that they are superior, not only to the presbyters, but even to the apostles." (Contr. Hær. lib. iii. cap. 2. vol. i. p. 174, 175.) To settle, therefore, the question, whether the churches with which he was in communion, or the heretics, had apostolic authority for their doctrine, Irenæus reasons thus:—

"All who desire to see the truth may behold the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the whole world in every church: and we can furnish a list of those¹ who were by the apostles constituted bishops in the churches, and of their successors unto ourselves, who have taught no such doctrine, nor known it, as these men rave about. For if the apostles had known hidden mysteries, which they taught to the perfect, separately and secretly² from the rest, they would have delivered them even principally to those to whom they committed the churches themselves. . . . But since it would be too long³ in such a volume as

¹ "Habemus annumerare eos."

² It is obvious that Irenæus did not admit of there being any doctrine which the apostles *taught to the perfect* ("perfectos docebant") *secretly*. He recognised no "doctrina arcani."

³ "It would be too long"—"Valde longum est."

this to enumerate the successions of all the churches, we show how the tradition of the church founded and established at Rome by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul, the greatest and most ancient church, and known to all, that tradition which it has from the apostles" "has come down to us through successions of bishops; and we thereby confound all those, who by any means hold things they should not, whether as pleasing to themselves, or through vain glory, or through blindness and wrong judgment.¹ For with this church on account of its higher rank every church must unite;² that is, those who are everywhere the faithful, in which that tradition which is derived from the apostles is always preserved by those who are everywhere." He then enumerates twelve bishops of Rome,³ interspersing some remarks not material to our present purpose; and adds: "In this order⁴ and in this doctrine⁵ both the tradition

¹ "Confundimus omnes eos, qui quoquo modo, vel per sibi placentia, vel vanam gloriam, vel per cæcitatem, et malam sententiam, præterquam oportet colligunt." Perhaps the last clause should be rendered—"assemble otherwise than they should"—instead of "holding things they should not." See the next quotation in the text.

² "Necesse est omnem convenire Ecclesiam." Perhaps it should be rendered, "the whole church must unite"—which would better suit the explanation: "those who are faithful in every place."

³ His list begins with Linus, Anacletus, and Clement. But of this more hereafter, ch. iv.

⁴ "Order"—*τάξις*—which in the Latin version is strangely rendered "ordinatione."

⁵ "Doctrine"—*διδασχῆ*. So all the MSS. of Eusebius (in which alone the Greek of this passage is preserved): but Dr. Burton thinks, that Irenæus wrote *διδασκαλῆ*.

preserved in the church from the apostles¹ and the preaching of the truth has come down to us." (Cont. Hær. lib. iii. cap. 3. vol. i. p. 175, 176.)

This is an important passage. It shows what Irenæus, the earliest writer (as far as I know) who speaks of succession of bishops from the apostles, understood by the expression; and that he attached to it no such meaning as, in the Tracts for the Times, is annexed to "apostolical succession." The essential idea involved in the "*fact of apostolical succession*" as asserted and explained in those Tracts is—not that there was (though this idea is included) a regular succession of bishops in the primitive churches from the time of the apostles, but—that each of these bishops received an *episcopal commission* from an apostle either immediately or by *successive transmission* through other bishops. Now as to any such episcopal commission, or any such transmission, and indeed as to the manner in which or the persons by whom bishops were in his time appointed, Irenæus is wholly silent: and the fact of a church being able to exhibit a list of its successive bishops from the time of the apostles raises no inference as to the manner in which, or the persons by whom, the episcopal office and authority was conferred on those bishops, any more than the naked fact of England or Poland having, during any given period of years, been governed by a succession of kings, determines the manner in which such kings succeeded each other.

¹ "The tradition preserved in the church from the apostles," ἡ τε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ παράδοσις.

In the one case, we know, it has been, though not without interruption, by hereditary descent; in the other it was (while Poland had a king) by election.

Nor can it be inferred from the use which Irenæus makes of the fact of succession, that the bishops, of whom he speaks, received any ordination or consecration to the office from any other bishop. His argument would rather lead to a contrary inference. His argument runs thus—The apostles founded certain churches, and placed bishops over them. These bishops have in each of these churches been succeeded by others in regular order to the present time, and we can enumerate them all. The tradition or doctrine which was taught by the apostles has been “preserved in” these “churches by the successions of presbyters.” This doctrine, therefore, is to be received and kept: not the doctrine taught by heretics, who have separated from these churches and cannot so trace back their doctrine to the apostles. Such in substance is the argument of Irenæus: an argument built, not on any apostolic commission supposed to have been transmitted from the apostles through a succession of bishops, but on the probability that the doctrine of the apostles would be most accurately preserved in those churches, over which an apostle had originally placed a bishop, and which from the time of that first bishop had had regular “successions of *presbyters*,” and “successions of *bishops*.” He uses both expressions, obviously resting his argument on such a *succession of ministers, however perpetuated, as*

continues and carries on the church in which they minister.

There is one other passage in a later book of the same treatise of Irenæus, which requires to be noticed.

“ We ought to obey those presbyters who are in the church, who have succession from the apostles as we have shown ;¹ who, with the succession of the episcopate, received according to the Father’s pleasure the sure gift of the truth. But the others, who depart from the principal succession, and assemble in any place, we should hold suspected, or as it were heretics, and of evil opinion ; or as it were creating schisms, and puffed up, and pleasing themselves ;² or again as hypocrites, who act thus for the sake of gain or vain-glory. All these have fallen from the truth. And heretics indeed, bringing a strange fire to the altar of God, that is, strange doctrines, shall be burnt with fire from heaven, like Nadab and Abihu. But those who rise up against the truth, and exhort others against the church of God, remain in the infernal regions, being swallowed up in an earthquake, as were those about Corah, Dathan, and Abiram. But those who divide and separate the unity of the church receive

¹ He refers, I conceive, to the passage already cited.

² “ Eis qui in Ecclesia sunt Presbyteris obandire oportet, his qui successionem habent ab Apostolis sicut ostendimus ; qui cum Episcopatus successione charisma veritatis certum, secundum placitum Patris acceperunt. Reliquos vero, qui absistunt a principali successione, et quocunque loco colligunt, suspectos habere, vel quasi hæreticos, et malæ sententiæ, vel quasi scindentes, et elatos, et sibi placentes.”—*Colligere* is used for “ to assemble ” by Tertullian (De fugâ in Persecutione, c. 14).

from God the same punishment as Jeroboam. But those who by many are believed to be presbyters, but serve their own lusts, and set not the fear of God before them in their hearts, but treat others with contumely, and do evil in secret, and say, ‘ No one seeth us,’ are convicted by the word. From all such then we ought to depart ; but to adhere to those, who both keep, as we said before, the doctrine of the apostles, and with the order [or rank] of the presbytery hold forth sound speech and a blameless life ¹ to the confirmation and reproof of others. Where therefore any one finds such, Paul instructing us says : *God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.* Where therefore the gifts of the Lord have been conferred, there we ought to learn the truth, from those with whom is that succession of the church which is from the apostles, and with whom is manifest a correct and irreproachable behaviour, and unadulterated and incorruptible discourse.” ² (Cont. Hær. Lib. iv. cap. 26. vol. i. 262, 263.)

In this passage, Irenæus first speaks of those “PRESBYTERS WHO HAVE SUCCESSION FROM THE APOSTLES as” he had before “shown, who with the SUCCESSION OF THE EPISCOPATE received according to the Father’s

¹ “ Cum presbyterii ordine sermonem sanum, et conversationem sine offensa præstant.”

² Ubi igitur charismata Domini posita sunt, ibi discere oportet veritatem, apud quos est ea quæ est ab Apostolis Ecclesiæ successio, et id quod est sanum et irreprobabile conversationis, et inadulteratum et incorruptibile sermonis constat.

pleasure the sure gift of the truth." He had before (as we have seen) contended, that the doctrine of the apostles was preserved in those churches in which there had been a succession of bishops from the apostles, but without laying down any rule or principle according to which that succession had been kept up. He now refers to that succession, and calls the *bishops* of those churches *presbyters*,¹ who had with the succession of the *episcopate* received the sure gift of the truth—thus using the words "bishops" and "presbyters" interchangeably. He then contrasts these bishops or presbyters with "the others who depart from the principal succession," i. e. the succession of which he had been speaking. Then, after denouncing judgments against heretics who bring in "strange doctrines," and against those who "divide" "the unity of the church," and after speaking of "those who by many are believed to be presbyters, but serve their own lusts," he says: "From all such then we ought to depart; but to adhere to those, who both keep, as we said before, the doctrine of the apostles, and with the order [or rank] of the presbytery hold forth sound doctrine and a blameless life." The language of the whole context requires us to include among these teachers, adherence to whom he inculcates, the bishops whose succession he had just before mentioned, and with them the elders of the same

¹ If any one think that Irenæus here speaks of presbyters, as distinct from bishops, the argument against apostolical succession in the *episcopal* line exclusively is only thereby strengthened. But I would not strengthen my argument by putting on the passage a sense, which I do not think belongs to it.

churches : that is to say, the teachers, whom he afterwards describes as “ those with whom is that **SUCCESSION OF THE CHURCH** which is from the apostles, and with whom is manifest a correct and irreproachable behaviour and unadulterated and incorruptible discourse.” The succession, of which he speaks throughout the passage, is a *succession of the church*, i. e. such a succession of ministers (whether bishops or presbyters) in a church as continued and carried on in the church from the time of the apostles to the time when he wrote : but he says nothing as to the *mode* in which that succession had been continued or brought down to his time ; while the ministers, whom he exhorts men to follow, are those, who, with this succession, “ *keep the doctrine of the apostles* ” and lead holy lives.

Irenæus, therefore, in these passages furnishes no evidence in favour of the alleged “ *fact* of apostolical succession ” in the Tractarian sense. Nor have I discovered in his writings any evidence in support of it.

TERTULLIAN was made a presbyter of the Church of Carthage about A. D. 192 : and sometime (probably about seven years) afterwards he seceded from the church, and adopted the opinions of the Montanists—a sect of enthusiasts and ascetics.¹

¹ See Waddington, *Hist. of the Church*, pp. 35, 69.—Bp. Kaye, in his *History of the Church in the second and third centuries*, illustrated by the writings of Tertullian, has endeavoured to distinguish Tertullian's works into (1.) those which he probably wrote while he was yet a member of the church ; (2.) those which he certainly wrote after he became a Montanist ; (3.) those which he probably wrote after he became a Montanist ; and (4.) those as to which nothing certain can be pronounced, whether he wrote them before or after he became a Montanist. (Bp. Kaye, p. 61—63.) When I refer to this distinction, I must be under-

In a work, probably written before his secession, he says that "the chief priest, who is the bishop, has the right of giving" baptism. "Next the presbyters and deacons, not however without the bishop's authority, for the sake of the honour of the church." He allows the right to the laity also; but as a right to be exercised in urgent cases only (De Bapt. cap. 17). I do not find,¹ that he draws any other distinction between the respective powers and offices of the bishop, presbyter, and deacon.²

Tertullian further states, that in those churches over which the apostles had placed a bishop, the line of bishops could be traced back from the bishops of his day to the bishop so appointed, and that by the exist-

stood as following Bishop Kaye's authority. In several passages, I avail myself of his translation.

¹ Bp. Kaye says: "How clearly soever the distinction between the Bishop and the other orders of clergy may be asserted in the writings of Tertullian, they afford us little assistance in ascertaining wherein the distinction consisted." (Hist. of the Church, &c. p. 236.)

² In a work (De Coronâ Militis, cap. 3), written when certainly a Montanist, he speaks of profession being made before baptism "under the hand of the *antistes*," and of the Eucharist being received only from the hand of the *presidents* (those who preside).

And in another work, respecting which nothing certain can be pronounced, whether it was written before or after he became a Montanist, Tertullian, after mentioning meetings where the scriptures were read, says that there also a divine censorship was exercised; and that "the older members, men of tried piety and prudence," presided, "having obtained that dignity not by purchase, but by acknowledged merit." (See App. vii. and Kaye's Hist. &c. pp. 222, 223.) This latter passage, even if Tertullian wrote it while a member of the church, only imports that when questions of excommunication or ecclesiastical censure were decided, the whole church was present, and some elder members of approved character, whether clerical or lay—for the word is "*seniores*," not "*presbyteri*"—presided.

ence of such a line of bishops in a church it might be distinguished as of apostolic foundation. Thence he argues (as Irenæus had argued before him), that the true doctrine of the apostles is that which is preserved in the churches founded by them: and he further asserts that the writings of the apostles were preserved uncorrupted in those churches and in the churches in communion with them. Many passages to this effect occur in the writings of Tertullian:¹ but I have searched in them in vain for any mention of the *mode* in which this succession had been perpetuated in the churches founded by the apostles, or of the *mode* in which either the first or any subsequent bishop had been appointed in the churches called apostolical but not so founded. He furnishes therefore no evidence in favour of the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession” in the Tractarian sense² of the words.

But I must not dismiss Tertullian’s testimony as altogether neutral on the question. He challenges the heretics of his day to trace the origin of their churches and the succession of their bishops, and to show that their first bishop derived his authority from the apostles. He speaks, as I have noticed, with great distinctness (and that³ in more passages than one), of churches founded by the apostles or by apostolical men, churches over each of which they appointed the first bishop;

¹ See Appendix viii.

² On referring to App. viii. it will be seen, that Bingham has misinterpreted Tertullian, when he renders—“*Ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recens, in Johannem stabit autorem.*” “The order of bishops when traced up to its original will be found to have St. John for one of its authors.”

³ See Appendix viii.

and he speaks of churches, which (being of much later date) were not so founded, but held the same faith as such churches, and were therefore considered as being also "apostolical churches:" while he calls the communities, against which he writes, "hæreses," heretical communities, not being received into communion by these "apostolical churches." There were, therefore, in Tertullian's time, two classes of churches esteemed apostolical, and actually in communion with each other: 1st, those which could trace a succession of bishops back to the time when they were founded by an apostle or by an apostolical man; and 2ndly, those of later foundation, which were also recognized as apostolical, *because they held the same faith*. Now if each church of the latter class had received its first bishop from a church of the former class, such a circumstance would scarcely have been overlooked by Tertullian as falling in with his argument. But he is silent as to the manner in which these later churches were founded. Again—if every bishop of each of these apostolical churches had, from its foundation to the time of Tertullian, been ordained to his office by some other bishop, by the bishop of some other church, would not Tertullian have referred to this practice as a bond of union distinguishing the apostolical churches? The silence of Tertullian on this point is to me very expressive.¹ It raises a strong presumption, that, when a bishop died, his successor was appointed by

¹ See particularly the second passage quoted in Appendix viii, and the sentence beginning "Communicatio pacis."

the church over which he was to preside, without any interference of any other bishop ; and that, if ordained to his office, he was ordained by the presbytery of his own church—a presumption, I mean, that this was the practice in many churches when Tertullian wrote ; and that, if at that time the practice to any extent prevailed of a bishop elect being ordained by other bishops, such practice was not universal, nor had existed continuously from the time of the apostles. This consideration does not neutralize Tertullian's testimony, but rather turns it against the alleged "*fact* of apostolical succession." For the alleged fact is, that there has been an uninterrupted succession, not merely of bishops, but of bishops *each and all of them episcopally ordained to the office of bishop*, from the time of the apostles to the present day.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA flourished between the years 192 and 217. He succeeded Pantænus in the direction of the catechetical school in that city : and he was (according to Jerome) a presbyter of the church of Alexandria.¹ The testimony deducible from his writings on the question of apostolical succession resembles in character that drawn from the works of Tertullian.

The principal passage bearing on the question is the following, which is quoted by Eusebius.² "Listen to a story that is no fiction, but a real history, handed down

¹ See Bp. Kaye's Account of the Writings of Clement of Alexandria, p. 4.

² I have, in this passage, availed myself of the translation given in Cruse's Eusebius, p. 89.

and carefully preserved, respecting the apostle John. For after the tyrant was dead, coming from the isle of Patmos to Ephesus, he went also, when called, to the neighbouring regions of the Gentiles, in some to appoint bishops, in some to institute entire new churches, in others to appoint to the ministry some¹ of those that were pointed out by the Holy Ghost. When he came therefore to one of these cities . . . and had in other respects consoled his brethren, he at last turned towards the bishop ordained (appointed²), and seeing a youth of fine stature, graceful countenance, and ardent mind, he said, "Him I commend to you with all earnestness, in the presence of the church and of Christ." The bishop having taken him and promised all, he repeated and testified the same thing, and then returned to Ephesus. The presbyter taking "the youth home . . . educated . . . and at length baptized him." The narrative then tells us, how the youth was enticed to join a gang of robbers, and became their captain; and how the apostle, returning to the same city, and having learnt of "the bishop" the course taken by the youth, went after him and reclaimed him (*Quis Dives Salvetur*, sect. 41, p. 959.)

Seeing the way in which the words bishop and presbyter are in this narrative applied interchangeably to the same individual, it *may* be questioned whether Clement meant, that the apostle appointed bishops in the

¹ "In others to appoint to the ministry some"—*ἄπθ δὲ κλήρω [κλήρον] ἕνα γέ τινα κληρώσων.*

² "Appointed"—*καθῆσθῶτι*

modern sense of the term, or ecclesiastical rulers, such as are in Acts xx. called interchangeably elders and overseers : and whether the clergy, whom he appointed in some cities, were not simply deacons. But, if we concede that the apostle appointed bishops as distinguished from elders and deacons, still the passage furnishes no information, as to the mode in which the *successors of those bishops* were appointed ; and consequently no evidence as to the alleged “*fact of apostolical succession,*” the transmission through bishops exclusively (as distinguished from presbyters) of a divine commission from the apostles.

In another passage Clement says : “ It is possible for a man even in the present day, who exercises himself in the commandments of the Lord, and lives perfectly and *gnostically* according to the gospel, to be enrolled in the number of the apostles. Such a man is the true presbyter of the church, and the true minister (διάκονος) of the will of God, if he does and teaches that which is of the Lord ; not chosen (χειροτονούμενος) by man ; not deemed righteous, because a presbyter, but enrolled in the presbytery, because righteous : although he may not be honoured with the first place (πρωτοκαθεδρία) upon earth, yet he will sit down among the¹ four-and-twenty thrones, judging the people, as John says in the Apocalypse.” Clement proceeds to remark, that these four-and-twenty judges will be selected from the most perfect members of the church, now composed of

¹ “ Clement has here mixed up Apoc. iv. 4, xi. 16, with Matt. xix. 28, or Luke xxii. 30.” (Bp. Kaye.)

Jews and Gentiles; and then adds, “for the degrees (*αἱ προκοπαί*) in the church on earth, of bishops, presbyters, deacons, are, in my opinion, imitations of the angelic glory, and of that dispensation which is said in scripture to await all who, walking in the steps of the apostles, live in perfect righteousness according to the Gospel. These,¹ according to the apostle, being raised in the clouds will first minister (*διακονήσιν*), will then, receiving an advancement in glory (for there are differences in glory), be enrolled in the presbytery, until they come unto the perfect man”² (Strom. lib. vi. sects. 13, 14, pp. 793, 794).

The opinion expressed by Clement in this passage is obviously inconsistent with the notion of a divine commission transmitted from the apostles through a succession of episcopal ordinations. I have cited, however, the passage—not for the sake of his opinion, to which as here expressed I attach little weight, but—as shewing, that, while there were in his time three degrees or ranks in the ministry (bishops, presbyters, and deacons³), he includes the two highest under the general word “presbyter,” and the office both of bishop and presbyter under the word “presbytery.”

So in another passage he writes—“He approves the

¹ “1 Thess. iv. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 41; Eph. iv. 13, are here mixed together.” (Bp. Kaye.)

² I have adopted Bishop Kaye’s language in this extract together with his two notes, and with the Greek words interspersed by him. (See Bp. Kaye’s Account of the Writings of Clement of Alexandria, p. 462, 463.)

³ Elsewhere he mentions bishops, presbyters, deacons, and *widows*. (Pæd. lib. iii. cap. 12, p. 309.)

husband of one wife, whether he be a presbyter, or a deacon, or a layman" (Strom. lib. iii. sect. 12, p. 552)—using the words presbyter and deacon in contradistinction to the layman, and consequently as including all the clergy—the bishop, therefore, among the presbyters.

Again—in a third passage (Strom. lib. vii. sect. 1, p. 830) he says, that the office of the presbyter is to amend the soul, that of the deacon to minister¹—where under the title of "presbyter," the bishop is obviously included, it being his office, as much as that of the presbyter, to amend the soul.

In these three passages Clement is not putting forward any peculiar opinion of his own as to the bishop and presbyter being included under the general term "presbyter:" but obviously uses the words "presbyter" and "presbytery" in the sense in which they were then commonly understood. In the two latter passages he uses the word "presbyter" to include all the clergy above the deacon: and, in the first, he uses the words "presbyter" and "presbytery" respectively to denote the highest minister and the highest ministry in the church, while in the same passage he distinguishes also between the degrees of bishop and presbyter. It may, therefore, be reasonably inferred, that, while the presbyters were distinguished in office from the deacons, the bishop was distin-

¹ Bp. Kaye (in his Account of the Writings of Clement of Alexandria, p. 462—464) gives this as the purport of—*τὴν μὲν βελτιωτικὴν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι σώξουσιν εἰκόνα· τὴν ὑπηρετικὴν δὲ οἱ διάκονοι.*

guished from the other presbyters as being the *chief presbyter*.¹

The result, therefore, is, that Clement of Alexandria, while he bears testimony to the existence of three degrees in the ministry, bears none in favour of the alleged "*fact* of apostolic succession;" but inferentially rather furnishes evidence against it by including bishops as well as elders under the common title of presbyters.

ORIGEN was the pupil of Clement of Alexandria; and, at the age of eighteen, succeeded his tutor as head of the catechetical school in that city. He was then a layman; and afterwards, before he was ordained, he went to Palestine, where, at the request and (it seems) in the presence of the bishops of Jerusalem and Cæsarea, he expounded the scriptures publicly in the church. For this proceeding Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, expostulated with those bishops, who answered him in a letter giving instances in which the same thing had been done before. Recalled by Demetrius, Origen resumed his occupation in the school. At a later period he was ordained presbyter by the bishops of Jerusalem and Cæsarea (Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 6, 19).

Origen repeatedly mentions bishops, presbyters, and deacons;² and in one passage tells us that different

¹ The conclusion which Bp. Kaye draws from the writings of Clement is, "that the bishop was distinguished from the rest of the clergy: he was in truth the chief presbyter." (Account of the Writings of Clement of Alexandria, p. 464.)

² Orig. in Num. Hom. ii. § 1, and in Ps. 37, Hom. i. § 1, vol. ii. 278,

duties belong to a widow,¹ a deacon, a presbyter, and a bishop, those of the latter being the heaviest.² But as to the difference of these duties, all that I gather from his writings is, that the deacons³ were entrusted with the money of the church; and that the presbyters were the senators, and the bishops the rulers of the church.⁴

With regard to the mode of appointing bishops, I find in Origen the three following passages.

1. "We invite those, who are powerful in speech and live a pure life (εἰς ὑγιεῖς χρωμένους) to the government (ἐπὶ τὸ ἄρχειν) of the churches: not admitting into the government (ἐκ ἀποδεχόμενοι) those who are fond of power, but constraining those who from great modesty are unwilling to undertake the public care of the church of God . . . and if those rule well, who rule in the church (οἱ ἄρχοντες ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ), being called prefects (προστάται) of our country according to God, I

681. Com. in Matt. scil. "Series veteris Interpretationis," § 10. Scil. in Matt. xxiii. 1—3, vol. iii. 836. Orig. in Luc. Hom. xvii. vol. iii. 953.

¹ Elsewhere he speaks of virgins as a recognised class in the church. (Orig. in Gen. Hom. xi, § 1, vol. ii. 89.)

² De Orat. § 28, vol. i. 253. In another passage, commenting on the Song of Solomon, i. 17, he whimsically enough considers the bishops as represented by the "beams," and the presbyters by the "rafters." (Orig. in Cant. lib. iii. vol. ii. 69, 70.)

³ Com. in Matt. tom. xvi. § 22, vol. iii. 753.

⁴ He speaks of "senators and rulers (βουλευτῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων) of the church." (Cont. Cels. lib. iii. § 30, vol. i. 466, 467.) By "rulers" he means bishops, as will appear by the passages next quoted in the text; consequently by "senators" he means the presbyters, though perhaps he may have had a peculiar reference to the twelve presbyters, who (as we shall see) at that time formed a council to the bishop of Alexandria.

mean of the church," &c. (Cont. Cels. lib. viii. § 75, vol. i. 798.)

2. "Even in the Church of Christ are found not only feasts, . . . but those also who love the first seats at them, and do many things: first indeed that they may be made deacons not such as the scripture mentions, but such as devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: and they shall therefore receive greater condemnation. And those, who wish to be made such deacons, next go about to obtain ¹ the chief seats of those who are called presbyters. But some not even satisfied with these intrigue very much ² that they may be called bishops by men, which is Rabbi; when they ought to understand that he should be made a bishop who is unblameable, and the other things which follow, so that if he be not by men said to be a bishop, he may nevertheless be one before God. For he who has in himself the things which Paul enumerates respecting a bishop, although he is not a bishop before men, is a bishop before God, although he has not reached that rank ³ by ordination of men. As he is a physician who has learnt the science of medicine, and is able to administer medicine as a physician, although the sick do not trust their bodies to him" (Com. in Matt. "Series Veteris Interpretationis," sect. 12, viz. in Matt. xxiii. 1—6. vol. iii. p. 838).

¹ "Go about to obtain"—"Ambiunt." The Greek has not been preserved.

² "Intrigue very much"—"Plurima machinantur."

³ "Rank"—"Gradum."

3. Commenting on Matt. xxi. 12, Origen says that the three descriptions of persons therein mentioned might be found in the Christian church, viz.—the worldly-minded, who are given to buying and selling, and seldom to prayer; the deacons, who misapply the money of the church to their own use; “the bishops and presbyters of the people who have been entrusted with the chief seats, and as it were sell whole churches to those to whom they should not, and who appoint those whom they ought not rulers, they are those who sell doves”¹ (Com. in Matt. tom. xvi. sect. 22, Vol. iii. p. 753).

From the two first of these passages, and especially from the canvassing and intriguing mentioned in the second, we cannot but conclude, that, when Origen wrote, it was usual for bishops to be chosen by the church over which they were to preside, whether by the clergy or by both laity and clergy does not appear; while we may infer from the third passage, that they were frequently at least elected by the elders. The passage, indeed, might, at first seem to intimate that the *ruler*, i. e. the bishop, of a church was appointed by “the bishops and presbyters of the people, who” had “been entrusted with the chief seats:” but the church, over which a bishop is to be appointed, has no bishop of its own; and the bishops of the neighbouring churches could not with propriety be joined with the

¹ Gr. ‘Οἱ δὲ τὰς πρωτοκαθεδρίας πεπιστευμένοι τοῦ λαοῦ ἐπίσκοποι καὶ πρεσβύτεροι, καὶ ὡς περὶ ἀποδιδόμενοι ὅλας ἐκκλησίας οἷς ὄν χρῆ, καὶ καθιστάντας οὓς οὐ δεῖ ἄρχοντας, οὗτοί ἐσιν οἱ πωλοῦντες τὰς περιστέρας.

presbyters of the vacant church as having been entrusted with the chief seats. We must, therefore, interpret the latter clause of the passage (on the principle of “reddendo singula singulis”) thus. The bishops, “who sell whole churches,” making money by an improper use of their episcopal authority; and the presbyters, who for filthy lucre’s sake “appoint those whom they ought not” to be bishops and “rulers” over them; these bishops and presbyters are “those who sell doves” in the temple. There is so much obscurity in the passage, that I do not rely upon this as the meaning, and urge it as a proof that the elders appointed their bishop: but this at least I may say, that, whatever is to be gathered from the passage as to the mode then in use of appointing bishops, it can scarcely be contended that, by an appointment so corrupt as Origen describes, a divine commission was, or could be, transmitted.

These three passages, therefore, furnish no evidence in favour of the alleged “fact of apostolical succession:” while—but that I refer to the Fathers for facts, not for opinions—the second of them might be cited as shewing, how little Origen thought of the necessity of ordination.

There are other passages,¹ in which Origen speaks of

¹ Philosoph. Proœmium. vol. i. 876—Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, id est De Principiis. Præf. § 2, and lib. iv. § 9, vol. i. 47, 166—of which latter work, Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, we have little left but a translation by Ruffinus, the fidelity of which is (to say the least) very questionable, as is manifest from what he says both in his general preface (vol. i. 45, 46), and in his preface to the third book (ib. 107).

succession from the apostles, but does not connect it with episcopacy ; and in one of them (Philosoph. Proœmium, vol. i. 876) he says that the Holy Spirit was given in the church, “ which ” (Holy Spirit) “ the apostles having first received it conferred on those who had rightly (ὀρθῶς) believed : of whom we being the successors (διὰδοχοί), and partaking of the same grace and chief priesthood and doctrine (διδασκαλίας), and being reckoned guardians of the church, have not slept at our post, or withheld right instruction ”—thus including himself, at most only a presbyter, among the *successors of the apostles*, who partake of the *chief priesthood*.¹

The evidence, therefore, furnished by the writings of Origen, is against, rather than for, the alleged “ fact of apostolical succession ”—the alleged “ successive transmissions ” to bishops alone “ of the prerogative of being ” “ the heirs and representatives of the apostles.”

¹ On the ground of this passage, the Benedictine Editor considers the *Philosophumena* as falsely ascribed to Origen, though his name is prefixed to it in four manuscripts.

CHAPTER IV.

CYPRIAN AND LATER WRITERS.

WE have now arrived at Cyprian, who was appointed bishop of Carthage about A.D. 250, and suffered martyrdom, A.D. 258.¹

In his writings we find several passages in which he speaks of a succession of bishops from the apostles.

In one passage he writes thus. Of Christ, “we read, saying to his apostles, and through them to all his bishops, who succeed his apostles by a vicarious ordination; ‘He that heareth you,’” &c. quoting Luke x. 16. (Ep. lxvi. to Florentius alias Pupianus, sect. 3. vol. ii. 197.)

In another passage, after quoting Matt. xvi. 18, 19, he says: “From thence, in a regular succession downwards, we date the ordination of bishops, and the course

¹ See Waddington’s History of the Church, p. 35, 50.

of ecclesiastical administrations, so as that we understand the church to be settled upon the bishops.¹ (Ep. xxxiii. to the Lapsed, sect. 1, vol. ii. 81.)

By “ordination” in these two passages, Cyprian, I conceive, means appointment;² and by “vicarious ordination” the *appointment* of one bishop in the place of another—appointment not necessarily including therein the idea usually attached to the English word *ordination*, viz. imposition of hands—at least not necessarily importing imposition of a *bishop’s* hands. These passages, therefore, determine nothing as to the *mode* in which bishops had been appointed from the time of the apostles: and consequently nothing as to the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession” in the Tractarian sense. The following passage is the account which Cyprian gives of the *mode* of appointing bishops, which in his time prevailed in *some* churches.

It occurs in a letter written by Cyprian (in concurrence with others) to Felix, a Spanish presbyter, and other members of the church, on the following occasion. Basilides and Martialis, two Spanish bishops, had been

¹ In another epistle Cyprian speaks of bishops as successors of the apostles. (Ep. xlv. to Cornelius, § 2, vol. ii. 110.)

² Cyprian clearly uses the word in the general sense of appointment in the next passage which I propose to examine. The expression “vicarious ordination” occurs also in a letter from Firmilian (bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia) to Cyprian, where (after quoting Matt. xii. 19 and John xx. 22, 23) he says “that the power of remitting sins was granted to the apostles, and to those churches which they, when sent forth by Christ, formed and founded, and to those bishops who succeeded them in a due and regular course of vicarious ordination.” (Cyprian’s Works, Ep. lxxv. § 11, vol. ii. p. 259.)

deposed from their episcopal functions, “as being tainted with the guilt of idolatrous libels,¹ and having their consciences burthened with the weight of divers horrid crimes.” Felix and others having consulted Cyprian on the case of these two deposed bishops, Cyprian in this letter advises them not to “communicate with a priest, who is a sinner: and (after quoting Hos. ix. 4, and Numb. xvi. 26.) he proceeds: “Wherefore a people, who would obey the rules of the gospel, and approve their fear of God, should separate themselves from a sinful bishop, and should not partake with a profane priest in his sacrifices; especially since the chief power of choosing worthy priests, and of rejecting unworthy ones, is lodged with them: which rule, we see, proceeded originally from God’s authority, that a bishop should be chosen in the presence of the people, in the most public manner, and be approved as worthy by the common suffrages of the whole body; even as our Lord commanded Moses in the book of Numbers,² saying; ‘Take Aaron thy brother, and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto the mount, before all the congregation;’³ and strip Aaron of his robe, and put it upon Eleazar his son, and Aaron shall be gathered

¹ Marshall (the translator) explains such a libel to mean a note to a magistrate, acknowledging the subscriber to be a worshipper of Jupiter, or Mars, &c. (See his note *g*, vol. ii. p. 71.)

² Numb. xx. 25, 26.

³ On these words Marshall (the translator) has the following note: “Before all the congregation. So the lxx; and the 27th verse expresses the transaction to have passed in this public manner, though the *Hebrew* doth not represent it as so directed to Moses, v. 25.”

unto his fathers, and shall die there.' God directs his priest to be made so before all the congregation, and thereby shews us, that he would not have the ordinations of his bishops performed but in the presence, and with the privity of the people; that so, the crimes of wicked men may be discovered, or the merits of good men be celebrated and applauded, and that the ordination may proceed regularly and fairly, which hath first received the approbation of the whole body. This rule, thus appointed of God, we find afterwards observed in the Acts¹ of the Apostles, when Peter spoke to the people upon the point of substituting some one to be an apostle in the room of Judas. . . . Nor do we find the apostles observing this rule in the case of bishops and priests only, but even in the ordination of deacons; concerning which it is recorded in their Acts,² that 'The twelve called the multitude of the disciples together, and said unto them,' &c. All this diligence and caution, in calling the people together, were therefore used, that no unworthy person might creep into the service of the altar, or into any share of the sacerdotal dignity. For, that unworthy persons are sometimes ordained, not according to the will of God, but through the rashness and presumption of men, and that it is exceedingly displeasing to him, when ordinations proceed not regularly, and as they should do, he hath most plainly told us by Hosea³ the prophet, saying; 'they have set up for themselves a king, but not by me.'

¹ Acts i. 15—23.

² Ib. vi. 2—5.

³ Hos. viii. 4.

“ Wherefore the rule which we have handed down to us from God himself, and from the practice of his apostles, should be observed with all exactness; as it is indeed already amongst us, and generally amongst the provinces here; viz. That in celebrating our ordinations, the neighbouring bishops of the province, where a bishop is to be ordained for any people, should meet upon the place, and choose a bishop in the presence of the people, who best know the lives and conversations of the several persons who may happen to be named, and have had opportunities of observing their behaviour and conduct. This rule, we find, you took along with you, in the ordination of our colleague Sabinus, who was unanimously chosen by the votes of all the people, and the approbation of the bishops, who were there assembled; and so the episcopate was conferred upon him, and he received imposition of hands accordingly, to succeed Basilides.” (Epist. lxvii. Cyprian and others to the Presbyter Felix and others in Spain, sect. 1—3, vol. i. p. 201—204.)

On this passage many observations of importance arise.

1. The rule, which Cyprian first lays down as having “ proceeded originally from God’s authority,” is “ that a bishop should be chosen in the presence of the people, in the most public manner, and be approved as worthy of the common suffrages of the whole body:” and this consent of the whole body is the point for which he is throughout contending; not ordination by or even with the concurrence of other bishops. He then quotes several

scriptures as establishing this rule: and thence concludes: "Wherefore the rule which we have handed down to us from God himself, and from the practice of his apostles, should be observed with all exactness"—obviously meaning, not that it had been handed down by oral tradition,¹ but that it was derived from the command of God and the practice of the apostles, recorded in the passages of scripture which he had just quoted. Whether those passages establish the rule, which he lays down, as a rule to be always observed in the Christian church, may well—especially as regards popular election—be questioned:² but I am dealing with his statements of fact, not with his opinions. My present observation is, that Cyprian *does not* say, that the rule in question had been observed from the time of the apostles. But,

2. He *does say*—"The rule . . . should be observed with all exactness; as it is indeed *already* among us, and generally amongst the *provinces here*"—in this

¹ Cyprian allowed of no tradition except the written word. See Appendix ix.

² It is quite clear from Numb. xx. 25, 26, that Eleazer was appointed by God himself to succeed Aaron as high priest; and that the people were called together to witness his being invested with the office, not to controul or even concur in the appointment. This is the result of the passage even if we adopt the words in the Septuagint, which are not found in the Hebrew. Nor would the passage, however understood, apply to the appointment of a Christian minister. The other two passages have already been considered. (Part i. ch. iii. and v.) The appointment of Matthias clearly furnishes no precedent: and it does not follow from the appointment of the seven treasurers by the people, that the same course is to be adopted in the appointment of bishops and elders, or even of deacons.

part of Africa—clearly implying that the rule was not even then, though in his opinion it ought to have been, universally observed ; and also intimating that it had not always existed even in his part of Africa. The value of his *opinion* may be estimated by the arguments on which it is founded : and *the fact*, that the rule for which he contends had not always been observed in his part of Africa, nor was even then universally received (perhaps not generally, except in his part of Africa), is most important in the present inquiry. That such was the fact is manifest from the guarded mode, in which he states the existing practice. Had the rule been universally or even generally observed, Cyprian would not, by so restricted a statement, have impaired his own argument. It cannot be doubted, that the practice was, when he wrote, by no means universal. It is the admission of an unwilling witness ; and it agrees with the inference, which we drew from a passage in Tertullian.¹

3. What is the rule for which Cyprian contends, and which he says is observed in his part of Africa ? “That in celebrating our ordinations, the neighbouring bishops of the province, where a bishop is to be ordained for any people, should meet upon the place, and choose a bishop in the presence of the people, who best know the lives and conversations of the several persons who may happen to be named, and have had opportunities of observing their behaviour and conduct.”

¹ See antè, ch. iii.

There is (it should be observed) a variation between the *rule* thus laid down by Cyprian for the choice of bishops, and the *account* which he gives of the election of Sabinus, whom he nevertheless considers as chosen according to the rule. In the passage just cited he *assigns the choice to the neighbouring bishops*, to be exercised in the presence of the people. But in the passage which immediately follows, he says that the rule was observed in the appointment of Sabinus, when elected by the *votes of the people*, with the approbation of the bishops present and of other bishops who had recommended him by letter. Sabinus (he says) “was unanimously chosen by the votes of all the people, and the approbation of the bishops, who were there assembled, and who had written letters beforehand on his behalf; and so the episcopate was conferred upon him.” The concurrence of the people and of the neighbouring bishops is the substance of the rule, which (he says) was observed in his part of Africa, and in the election also of Sabinus. By this concurrence “the episcopate was conferred upon Sabinus, and he received imposition of hands.” The point for which Cyprian contends is, not the imposition of episcopal hands as essential to the conferring of episcopal authority,—not the concurrence even of the bishops, but the concurrence of the people, as necessary to the valid appointment of a bishop. He had before said of the people, that “the chief power of chusing worthy priests” (including, and principally meaning, *bishops* as the context shows)

“and of rejecting unworthy ones, is lodged with them : which rule proceeded ” originally from God’s authority. On the question, whether popular election to the Christian ministry is a practice pointed out by the word of God, I have, in a former chapter,¹ arrived at a conclusion opposed to that of Cyprian : and I merely cite these words to show, that (as a matter of fact) the rule, which he represents as being then followed in his part of Africa, gave the people an *effective* voice or controul in the choice of a bishop ; and that it is in support of this controul that his argument is directed, not in affirmance of the necessity of episcopal ordination or of the concurrence of the neighbouring bishops.

4. The passage therefore in question, when examined with the context, leads us to the conclusion, that, when Cyprian wrote, the custom of Carthage and the neighbouring parts of Africa and of some parts also of Spain² was, that, when a church had lost its bishop, a successor was appointed by the people and the neighbouring bishops assembled on the occasion—whether the bishops proposed and the people concurred, or the people chose and the bishops approved, is not material—the custom seems to have required the concurrence of both parties, and *especially* (in Cyprian’s opinion at least) that of the people. But it is also to be inferred from the passage, that the custom

¹ See part i. ch. vii.

² From other parts of his writings it should *seem*, that a similar course was in his time the usage of the church of Rome. (Ep. lv. to Antonian, § 5, vol. ii. 130, 131.)

had not always existed, nor had even then been adopted every where.

5. Cyprian calls it the rule observed "in celebrating" "ordinations," using the word rendered "ordinations" to express *appointment*; and he does not represent it as being any part of the *rule*, that the bishop, when elected, should be ordained by the bishops present. He states, indeed, the *fact*, that Sabinus was by the concurrence of the people and neighbouring bishops chosen bishop of some place in Spain, and that "so the episcopate was conferred upon him, and he received imposition of hands accordingly to succeed Basilides"—from whom he does not say; though we may presume that he received it—from the bishops assembled, either alone or jointly with the presbyters of the place.

But it does not thence follow, that, when a bishop had been appointed according to the rule which Cyprian had previously laid down, he always received imposition of hands: still less that such imposition of hands was necessary to confer the episcopal authority.

Nor are we left to infer from the writings of Cyprian, that the custom, stated by him as the custom in appointing bishops observed in his parts, did not then prevail universally. We have distinct evidence, that, in the church of Alexandria, a different custom prevailed from the foundation of that church till after the council of Nice, three quarters of a century later than the time of Cyprian's appointment to the see of Carthage.

Eutychius¹ of Alexandria, after mentioning that Mark the evangelist went and preached at Alexandria, and appointed Hananias the first patriarch of that city, adds: "Moreover he appointed twelve presbyters with Hananias, who were to remain with the Patriarch, so that when the Patriarchate was vacant they might elect one of the twelve presbyters, upon whose head the other eleven might place their hands and bless him [or, invoke a blessing upon him] and create him Patriarch, and then choose some excellent man and appoint him presbyter with themselves in the place of him who was thus made Patriarch, that thus there might always be twelve. Nor did this custom respecting the presbyters, namely, that they should create their Patriarchs from the twelve presbyters, cease at Alexandria until the times of Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was of the number of the 318 [bishops at Nice]. But he forbade the presbyters to create the Patriarch for the future, and decreed that when the Patriarch was dead, the bishops should meet together and ordain the Patriarch. Moreover he decreed that on a vacancy of the Patriarchate, they should elect, either from any part of the country, or from those twelve presbyters, or others, as circumstances might prescribe, some excellent man, and create him Patriarch. And thus that ancient custom by which the Patriarch used to be created by the presbyters disappeared, and in its place succeeded the

¹ From the passage itself it appears that he wrote after the council of Nice (A.D. 325), and consequently after the martyrdom of Cyprian.

ordinance for the creation of the patriarch by the bishops.”¹

Severus relates the proceedings on the death of Theonas, one of these patriarchs, which happened many years after Cyprian’s martyrdom; and he tells us that “the priests and people were collected together at Alexandria, and laid their hands upon Peter, his son in the faith and disciple, a priest, and placed him in the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria, according to the command of Theonas, in the tenth year of the emperor Diocletian.”²

The slight apparent discrepancy between these two passages may easily be removed. Eutychius states the rule or custom; Severus relates concisely what actually took place at one particular election. Eutychius men-

¹ The original is in Arabic. I have followed the translation given by the Rev. William Goode in his “Divine Rule” (vol. ii. p. 80, 81), from Selden’s Latin version, which he gives in p. 81, n. 1. His reference is to “Eutych. Patr. Alex. Ecclesiæ suæ orig. Ed. J. Selden. London, 1642. 4to. pp. 29—31.” To Mr. Goode’s important work I refer, both for a vindication of Selden’s version, and for a triumphant exposure of the attempts made to explain away this passage.

² The original is in Arabic. I have followed the translation given in Goode’s “Divine Rule” (vol. ii. p. 82). from the Latin version of Renaudot, which he gives in n. 3, viz.—“Congregatos fuisse Alexandriæ sacerdotes et plebem, manusque imposuisse super Petrum, filium ejus spiritualem et discipulum, sacerdotem, eumque collocasse in solio Patriarchali Alexandrino juxta Theonæ mandatum, anno decimo Diocletiani Imperatoris.” Mr. Goode’s reference is “Renaud. Hist. Patr. Alex. p. 54. The extract is from a MS. work of Severus, De vit. et reb. gest. Patr. Alex.” It strikes me, that this MS. might, if examined, throw much light on the subject. It may probably contain an account of the appointment of some other patriarch.

tions the twelve presbyters only, in whom the appointment of the patriarch was vested, from whom the patriarch was to be chosen, and of whom the remaining eleven were to lay hands on his head. Severus says, that the priests (sacerdotes) and people were assembled—but Eutychius does not say, that the people were excluded from being present at the appointment of a new patriarch. Severus mentions the priests generally, not particularly specifying the twelve presbyters; nor had he any occasion to specify them, as he does not mention the election, but only the assembling, and the laying on of hands, and the enthroning: we may, indeed, infer from the tenor of his narrative, that the election, in the case of Peter, was merely formal, the choice having been previously fixed upon him, as the spiritual son and disciple of Theonas, and in pursuance of his “command” (his recommendation probably). Lastly Severus, if taken literally and strictly, would seem to say, that the persons assembled, priests and people, laid hands on Peter—but no one would understand him to say, that every individual present laid his hands on Peter—the plain meaning is, that those of the individuals assembled, whose office it was, laid hands on the patriarch elect, the others being assembled to witness the transaction.

We have then in Eutychius, illustrated and confirmed by Severus, distinct evidence of the existence of a custom in the church of Alexandria, differing altogether from the custom mentioned by Cyprian as prevailing among the African churches in his province—a custom

traced back to the time of Mark the evangelist—a custom which vested the *election* and *creation* of the patriarch, in twelve presbyters without the concurrence of any bishop. The eleven presbyters, who remained after one of their number had been elected bishop, laid their hands upon his head, and implored a blessing upon him, thereby setting him apart for his new office, as the “prophets and teachers”—not apostles or bishops—which were in the church at Antioch, “fasted and prayed and laid their hands on” Paul (an apostle already) and Barnabas, and “sent them away,” thus separating them for “the work” to which the Holy Ghost had “called them”¹—the missionary journey on which they went, as related immediately afterwards.²

By this election and imposition of *presbyters’* hands the individual was, according to Eutychius, *created* patriarch, invested therefore (without episcopal intervention) with the full authority of the episcopal office, and accordingly (as we learn from Severus) Peter, immediately on being so appointed, was placed on the patriarchal *throne*.³

¹ Acts xiii. 1—3. See my observations on this passage, part i. ch. iii.

² Acts xiii. 4 to xiv. 26. See especially xiv. 26.

³ This statement of Severus overturns the fancy of some persons, that the rule mentioned by Eutychius related only to the election, and that the Patriarch elect was afterwards ordained by bishops—a fancy, which Mr. Goode on other grounds has shown to be without foundation. Bingham quotes the three following passages relating to this custom of Alexandria. (Book ii. ch. xi. § 2.)

I. “They were used to make no delay after the decease of a bishop, but chose one presently, that they might not run into factions about the choice of a successor.” (Epiphanius.)

This view of the usage of the church of Alexandria is confirmed by a passage in Jerome,¹ which, on account of its importance, I quote at some at length.

After citing several passages from the Acts and the Epistles, to show that "a bishop and a presbyter are the same,"² he adds: "But that afterwards³ one was chosen to be over the rest; this was done to prevent schism, lest each one drawing the church of Christ after him, should break it up. For at Alexandria,

II. "Cyril of Alexandria was enthroned the third day after the death of Theophilus." (Socrates, lib. vii. c. 7.)

III. "It was customary for the successor to watch over the dead body of the deceased bishop, and to lay his right hand upon his head [*manumque dexteram ejus capiti suo imponere*—i.e. to lay the right hand *of the deceased bishop* upon his *own* head], and to bury him with his own hands, and then take the pall of St. Mark, and so [*tunc legitime*—then legitimately] sit on his throne." (Liberatus Breviar. c. 20.)

From these passages it appears, that the election of a new Patriarch took place with extraordinary rapidity, on one occasion in three days after the death of the predecessor, generally before his burial. How could bishops in that short interval be assembled to lay hands on him? The only allusion to ordination is, that the new Patriarch used to place the hand of the deceased bishop on his own head. Surely this strange proceeding would not have been noticed, and all mention of ordination by a living bishop omitted, if such ordination there had been. Yet the new Patriarch buries his predecessor with his own hands, and then puts on the pall of St. Mark, and *then legitimately* sits down on his throne. Is it reasonable, without a shadow of authority to conjecture, that he *afterwards* received the imposition of episcopal hands, and with it the episcopal commission?

¹ Jerome was born about A.D. 345, or twenty years after the council of Nice. (Waddington, 141, 721.)

² *Audi et aliud testimonium, in quo manifestissime comprobatur eundem esse Episcopum atque Presbyterum.*" He then quotes Tit. i. 5, and 1 Tim. iv. 14, and 1 Pet. v. 1, and 2 John 1, and 3 John 1—having previously quoted Philip i. 1 and Acts xx. 28.

³ "Quod autem postea."

also,¹ from Mark the evangelist to the bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters always called one elected from among themselves, and placed in a higher rank, their bishop; just as an army may constitute its general,² or deacons may elect one of themselves, whom they know to be diligent, and call him archdeacon. For what does a bishop do, with the exception of ordination, which a presbyter may not do.³ . . . All are successors of the apostles. . . presbyter and bishop, the one is a name denoting age, the other dignity.”⁴ (Ep. ad Evang. Ep. 146. tom. i. p. 1074.)

In this passage, Jerome not only confirms Eutychius' statement of the custom of the church of Alexandria, but shows his understanding of the custom to be, that the presbyters there *exclusively* appointed their bishop; and he further tells us how bishops were originally introduced into the church.

He confirms the statement of Eutychius, though he speaks of the custom as continuing (not till Alexander, but) till Heraclas and Dionysius, bishops. He had obviously not seen the statement either of Eutychius or of Severus, or he would not have spoken of the custom continuing till Heraclas and Dionysius, who succeeded each other as bishops of Alexandria, and were prior not only to Alexander and the council of

¹ “Nam et Alexandriæ.”

² “Imperatorem faciat.”

³ I have followed Mr. Goode's translation (Divine Rule, ii. 83) thus far, where he stops.

⁴ Cæterum omnes Apostolorum successores sunt Presbyter et Episcopus, aliud ætatis, aliud dignitatis est nomen.”

Nice, but to Theonas and Peter.¹ He must have derived his information from some other source, probably from some writer contemporary with Heraclas and Dionysius, from whom (of course) he would only have learnt that the custom had continued till their time; and he does *not* say that it then ceased. His, therefore, is testimony independent of those of Eutychius and Severus, and probably derived from an earlier source, from a source contemporary with the existence of the custom. It leaves no room to doubt the accuracy of the statements of Eutychius and Severus.

More than this—Jerome's testimony establishes as correct that view of the custom, which ascribes to the presbyters from first to last the appointment of the patriarch of Alexandria; not only his election (*unum ex se electum*), but his elevation to a higher rank: for Jerome compares the proceeding to that of an army constituting a general (*imperatorem faciat*)—which, according to the Roman custom, was by acclamation—or of deacons choosing an archdeacon. And the whole tenor of the passage shows, that Jerome intended to state the appointment of the bishops of Alexandria as made *without any episcopal interference or sanction*. On the custom *so understood* his argument is founded: and it is intelligible on no other hypothesis. He asks indeed —“ What does a bishop do, with the exception of ordination, which a presbyter may not do ? ” But he does not ascribe this exception to any difference of

¹ See Eusebius Ec. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 35, and vii. 32.

apostolic commission between a bishop and a presbyter. His position is, that "the bishop and presbyter are the same"—both "*successors of the apostles*," successors (not in the sense of a transmitted commission, but) as holding in the church the same office of pastors and teachers, the bishop being placed "over the rest" as their ruler. And this is obviously the ground of the exception, it belonging to the bishop *as chief ruler of the church* to ordain: an exception, therefore, limited to the case of the church having a bishop, and not precluding the presbyters (when the see is vacant) from electing and laying hands (as those of Alexandria did) on their new bishop.

Once more—Jerome's account of the introduction of bishops, as distinguished from presbyters, deserves serious attention. Jerome had his faults, and great faults: but he was a man of extensive learning. He argues from scripture, that "a bishop and presbyter" are the same: and then adds that "afterwards one was chosen to be over the rest"—why?—"to prevent schism;" to form a bond of union between the presbyters, and again to facilitate union among the different churches. That he is right in his view of the passages of scripture which he cites (Philipp. i. 1, and Acts xx. 28; Tit. i. 5, and 1 Tim. iv. 14, and 1 Pet. v. 1, and 2 John 1, and 3 John 1), is (I think) clear,¹ and will scarcely be disputed by any one, though an advocate for episcopacy, who has carefully considered

¹ See part i. ch. vi.

the question : and what he adds, as a matter of fact, respecting the purpose for which one presbyter was “ chosen to be over the rest ” is not inconsistent with what we read in the epistles to the seven apocalyptic churches, or with the facts which have been deduced from our examination of the fathers down to the time of Cyprian. It is a statement, which implies a *gradual* introduction of episcopacy into the churches, first into one church and then into another, a statement in perfect harmony with the result which I deduced from an examination of several epistles of the apostolic fathers,¹ and at the same time utterly at variance with the notion of apostolical succession by episcopal ordination. The purpose, however, for which principally I quote this passage of Jerome, is not for his opinion respecting the bishop and presbyter, but to confirm the statement of Eutychius respecting the original custom of the church of Alexandria in the appointment of its patriarchs, and to overturn the erroneous glosses sought to be put upon it.

I now revert to that statement of Eutychius as incontrovertibly correct, and as establishing, that from the time of Hananias, who was appointed by St. Mark, bishop of Alexandria, till after the Council of Nice—a period of more than two centuries—the twelve presbyters of Alexandria elected from among themselves their bishop or patriarch, and by their appointment of him to the episcopal office (the other eleven laying hands

¹ See antè, ch. ii.

upon him) constituted him bishop or patriarch—the ruler of their church—entitled (without any sanction or confirmation by any other bishop) to perform all the duties of the episcopal office.

It is further evident from the statement, that this practice existed when there was no want of bishops to ordain or consecrate (had that been thought necessary) the patriarch. For Alexander (the patriarch who put an end to the custom) is said to have transferred the election to “the bishops”—and may we not from this expression, and from the title of patriarch¹ given to the bishop of Alexandria, reasonably conclude, that Alexandria was a mother church by which other churches had been founded, with bishops of their own? Yet these bishops took no part in the appointment of the patriarch, until after the Council of Nice.

Further: this custom was observed for more than two centuries without objection being made to it—observed, not in an obscure church, but in one of the principal churches of the age, in the chief city and metropolitan church of Egypt, in a church and city of which the catechetical school successively under Clement and Origen was renowned throughout the world. Its patriarchs, thus created by the presbyters, were recognized by other churches; and we learn from the state-

¹ I do not think we are to understand, that the bishop of Alexandria was from the first called Patriarch: or that any such title was, in that early age when the church of Alexandria was founded, given to any bishop. It was probably given to the bishop of this church, and of other Eastern churches, when they had become mother churches, having founded others.

ment in Eutychius, that its patriarch Alexander was one of the 318 bishops assembled at the Council of Nice.

What then is the effect of this one fact? What is the effect of this Alexandrian custom upon the question of episcopal succession *by episcopal ordination* from the time of the apostles?

In the first place it confirms the objections which I have offered to various passages in Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, being received as evidence in support of the alleged "*fact* of apostolical succession" in the Tractarian sense of the word—those passages, I mean, in which the writer either speaks in general terms of succession or episcopal succession from the apostles, or asserts that apostolical churches can enumerate the succession of their bishops from the first bishop appointed by an apostle. It annihilates all such passages *as evidence for such a purpose*. The Alexandrian patriarch—Heraclas, or Dionysius, or Alexander—could with strict truth have talked of episcopal succession in his church from the first bishop appointed by Mark the evangelist, and have enumerated the succession of bishops of Alexandria from that first bishop: and yet those bishops were "created" by the presbyters; they were not episcopally ordained to the office of bishop.¹

¹ An attempt may possibly be made to distinguish this case of the church of Alexandria from modern Presbyterianism. The writer of Tract 7 (from which I have quoted the assertion of the "*fact*" of Apostolical succession) considers Priests and Deacons as intrusted by the bishop with a portion only of his authority, and the episcopal system as the result of this practice of delegation; and he contends that "the

In the next place, the Alexandrian custom makes a gap in apostolical succession through episcopal ordination, which can never be filled up—breaks a link in the supposed chain, which can in no way be replaced. Even, if it could be shown that the custom was peculiar to the church of Alexandria, how could any bishop of the present day, tracing back his succession through a series of bishops to an apostle, prove satisfactorily, that no individual in that series had derived his episcopate mediately or immediately from one of these Alexandrian patriarchs?

But can it be shewn that the custom was, in the first ages of Christianity, peculiar to the church of Alexandria? Is it probable, that the evangelist St. Mark should have there introduced an usage at variance with

Presbyterian ministers have assumed a power, which was never intrusted to them:" that "they have presumed to exercise the power of ordination, and to perpetuate a succession of ministers, without having received a commission to do so." And he may possibly say of the twelve presbyters of the church of Alexandria, that they did receive from St. Mark at first directly, and afterwards by successive transmission, a commission both to create a Patriarch or Bishop on a vacancy and to perpetuate their own body: and that in this particular they had a commission beyond that usually given to Presbyters. *Supposing their case were peculiar*, it would not affect my argument against the assertion in the Tract "as to the *fact* of Apostolical Succession" by episcopal ordination, "that this succession has been preserved, all over the world"—for it was not preserved in the church of Alexandria. But the peculiarity, if any, of the Alexandrian custom was, I conceive, not that presbyters "created" their bishops, but that the appointment was *restricted* to a council or chapter of *twelve* presbyters. It still remains for the advocates of "Apostolical Succession" in the Tractarian sense to prove, that the authority to ordain does not belong to the supreme ruler or rulers for the time being of the church, whether bishops or presbyters.

the practice of other churches? The truth seems to be, that the apostles laid down general principles for the government of churches and the appointment of ministers; and that those principles were variously carried out in different churches according to circumstances, resulting in some churches earlier, in others later, in all ultimately in the threefold distinction of ministers, as consonant with, but not essentially required by, those principles.

And here I might close the evidence. If the testimony of the fathers of the three first centuries not only fails to establish the alleged "fact," but raises a strong presumption that in those times elders were frequently, or in some churches, raised to the episcopate without episcopal interference, the early links of the chain are obviously wanting, the chain is broken, and it cannot be repaired by any evidence, however decisive, that a custom universally prevailed at a later period, for every bishop to be set apart to his office by the laying on of episcopal hands. But it may perhaps be asked, why not proceed to Eusebius,¹ the earliest ecclesiastical historian now extant? References to lost writings of the fathers may be found in his history. Does he throw no light on the mode in which bishops were appointed in his own time, or in times before his own? Very little light indeed, and that little by no means favourable to the notion of apostolical succession. He

¹ He was made bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine about A.D. 315, and died A.D. 339 or 340. (Waddington's History of the Church, p. 86.) He consequently survived the council of Nice fourteen or fifteen years.

does not, in his ecclesiastical history, mention any custom as having prevailed in the appointment of bishops; he does not even allude¹ to the Carthaginian, or to the Alexandrian, usage: though he quotes the passage, which has already been considered, in which Clement of Alexandria relates how St. John, after his return from Patmos to Ephesus, went about the neighbouring regions of the Gentiles appointing bishops (Ecc. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 23). Eusebius, however, mentions the appointment of various individuals as bishops of different churches at different periods; and it may be useful to notice the terms in which he mentions the appointment of several (among others) of the bishops of Rome.

1. Eusebius mentions in the following terms the respective appointments of Linus, Anencletus, Clement, Euarestes, Urbanus, and Stephen to that office.

“After the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, Linus was the first that received the episcopate of the church of the Romans” (Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 2).

In the second year of Titus, “Linus, bishop of the church of the Romans, who had held the office twelve years, *transferred*² it to Anencletus” (ib. cap. 13).

In the twelfth year of Domitian, “Clement succeeded Anencletus”³ (ib. cap. 15).

¹ He gives Cyprian’s account of the way in which Novatius the schismatic got himself irregularly ordained bishop of Rome (in opposition to Cornelius) by three Italian bishops. (Ecc. Hist. lib. vi. ch. 43.) But he makes no comment on it as following out a custom.

² Gr. Παραδίδωσι.

³ This statement does not agree with those of earlier writers. See post, ch. iv.

In the third year of Trajan, Clement, bishop of Rome, "*committed the office* to Euarestus, and departed this life."¹ (ib. cap. 34).

Zephyrinus, bishop of Rome, who died in the first year of the second Antonine, was succeeded in the episcopate by Callistus, "who survived him five years, and *left*² the church to Urbanus" (ib. lib. vi. cap. 21).

Lucius, bishop of Rome (in the reign of Gallus) "did not hold the office quite eight months, when dying he *transferred*³ it to Stephen" (Ecc. Hist. lib. vii. cap. 2).

The expression "left," used in respect of Callistus, does not necessarily import that he nominated his successor; but, when we are told, that Clement *committed*, and that Lucius (as well as Linus) *transferred*, the episcopal office, we cannot but understand, that in each case the bishop appointed his own successor; and at the same time it is *not* intimated that he ordained the individual whom he appointed.

2. In the reign of Gordian, Fabianus succeeded Anteros as bishop of Rome; and Eusebius gives the following narrative of his appointment—"They say, that Fabianus having come to Rome with some others from the country, was staying there, and was in the most remarkable manner, by divine and celestial

¹ Gr. Ἐυαρέστῳ παραδὲς τὴν λειτουργίαν, ἀναλύει τὸν βίον. The construction of this sentence clearly imports, that Clement, having *first* committed this charge to Euarestus, *then* died.

² Gr. καταλείπει.

³ Gr. μεταδίδωσι τὸν κλῆρον. So Dr. Burton in the text. He gives in a note, διαδίδωσι.

grace, advanced to the office. When all the brethren had assembled in the church, for the purpose of electing¹ him that should succeed in the episcopate, and there being very many eminent and illustrious men in the minds of many, Fabianus being present, no one indeed thought of him. But they² relate, further, that a dove suddenly flying down from on high, sat upon his head, exhibiting a scene like that of the Holy Spirit once descending upon our Saviour in the form of a dove. Upon this the whole body exclaimed, with all eagerness, and with one voice, as if moved by the one Spirit of God, that he was worthy; and without delay they took and placed him upon the episcopal throne" (lib. vi. cap. 29). Such is the

¹ "Electing." So I render *χειροτονίας*—which Cruse renders "ordination." Suicer says that τὸ *χειροτονεῖν* in its primary and proper signification means to elect by show of hands; that it denotes to elect by suffrage to the episcopate, which formerly ("olim") was done by the people. He shows that *χειροτονία* is used in ecclesiastical writers for election, and for ordination. The primary and proper signification of the words—"election by show of hands"—obviously suits the passage in the text better than "ordination"—the election being that in which "all the brethren" had to take a part.

² "And there being . . . thought of him. But they." So I render *πλείστων τε ἐπιφανῶν καὶ ἐνδόξων ἀνδρῶν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ὑπονοίᾳ ὑπαρχόντων, ὁ Φαβιανὸς παρὼν οὐδενὸς μὲν ἀνθρώπων εἰς διάνοιαν ἤει· ὁ δὲ οὐδὲν*—which Mr. Cruse renders—"Though there were very many eminent and illustrious men in the expectation of many, Fabianus being present, no one thought of any other man. They."—This appears to me an erroneous version. There is no "though" in the original: *ὁ Φαβιανὸς παρὼν οὐδενὸς μὲν ἀνθρώπων εἰς διάνοιαν ἤει* cannot be rendered, "Fabianus being present, no one thought of any other man:" and the *μὲν . . . δὲ* evidently contrast his not being thought of by men, with his being appointed by God.

narrative of Eusebius: and though he guards it by—"they say"—"they relate"—he obviously believes the tale; for he entitles the chapter—"Of Fabianus, how he was remarkably appointed bishop of the Romans by God." Nor, indeed, except the irreverent allusion to the descent of the Holy Spirit on our Lord, is there any thing very improbable in the narrative. A dove might have taken shelter in the place where on this occasion the brethren assembled; and, being disturbed and alarmed by the concourse, might have flown about and finally alighted almost unconsciously on the head of Fabianus, when some superstitious individual, observing the circumstance, and calling perhaps to mind the circumstances of our Lord's baptism, exclaimed that he was worthy on whose head the dove had alighted, and was (as often happens in popular assemblies) joined by one and another in the exclamation till the whole meeting concurred. If to this extent the narrative is true, then we have a bishop, the immediate predecessor of Cyprian's contemporary Cornelius,¹ placed on the episcopal throne of Rome by the sudden acclamation of the whole assembly² of Christians, without any episcopal ordination; for he was "without delay" placed on the episcopal throne: and, even if the whole narrative be deemed a fiction—an early Romish legend—it shows the practice of the age; for the legend-writer would not have failed,

¹ See Waddington, 721.

² We are forcibly reminded of Jerome's comparison of the appointment of a bishop to that of an Emperor quoted already in this chapter.

had such been the established course, to describe the solemn imposition of episcopal hands before the bishop elect was enthroned. Should it be said, that Fabianus was ordained or consecrated bishop after being enthroned, my reply is, that such an assumption is at once devoid of all evidence, and so improbable that it could not be received without the strongest proof. What more absurd on the hypothesis of apostolic succession in the Tractarian sense, than to place a man formally in the episcopal chair, before he has received his commission as bishop. Against such a proceeding every consistent advocate of apostolic succession would protest as a monstrous and profane intrusion.

If we place any reliance on Eusebius, can we believe, that when these bishops of the church of Rome were appointed, any such custom prevailed in that church as Cyprian tells us existed in his part of Africa?

But, before we quit Eusebius, we must compare his account of the order in which the three first bishops of Rome were appointed, with the accounts given by three other writers—by Irenæus and Tertullian who wrote before him, and by Augustine who wrote at a later period.

1. Eusebius, as we have just seen, places them in this order: Linus, Anencletus, Clement. He tells us, that “*after*” the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, Linus was the first that received the episcopate of the church of the Romans: and he fixes the 12th year of Domitian as that in which Clement succeeded Anencletus¹

¹ Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 2, 13, 15.

—a date subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, and consequently to the writing of the epistle¹ which Clement in the name of the church of Rome sent to the church of Corinth.

2. Irenæus gives the three bishops in the same order as Eusebius; and his is the earliest account of the matter. But he tells us, that the apostles Peter and Paul “committed the office of the episcopate to Linus” (Irenæus, Lib. iii. c. 3. § 3.), therein differing from Eusebius, who says that Linus “received the episcopate” “*after* their martyrdom,” while he elsewhere² quotes the account given by Irenæus.

3. Tertullian, who wrote nearly about the same time as Irenæus, probably a little later, enumerating the first bishops of several churches, says that Clement was made bishop of Rome by Peter (De Præscrip. adv. Hæres. cap. 32).

4. Augustine gives the order of the same three bishops thus: Linus, Clement, Anencletus (Aug. Ep. 165, as cited by Bingham, bk. ii. ch. 1, § 4).

Of these four authorities, it is evident, no two agree with each other. There is, however, one point in which they all agree—that Clement was, at one time or another, bishop of Rome. This we may consider, therefore, as a *fact* established by sufficient evidence. Eusebius, the only one of the four authorities who mentions dates, fixes Clement’s appointment in the 12th of Domitian, long after the martyrdom of the

¹ See antè, ch. ii.

² Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. v. cap. 6.

apostles Peter and Paul. He tells us further, that the letter from the church of Rome to the church of Corinth was written by Clement (Ecc. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 16): and I am not aware of any contradiction to this statement. Now from internal evidence (as we have seen¹) this epistle was written in the interval between the martyrdom of those two apostles and the destruction of Jerusalem: and the writer nowhere mentions either himself or any bishop of Rome. Clement, therefore, could scarcely have been at that time bishop of Rome: nor is it probable that there was then a bishop of Rome. This epistle, therefore, while it corroborates the statement of Eusebius as to the date of Clement's appointment to the bishopric of Rome, casts great doubt on his account of Linus and Anencletus as having been Clement's predecessors in that office: and this doubt is greatly strengthened by the contradictory statements of Tertullian and Augustine.

If we turn to St. Paul's epistles, we shall find further reason for thinking, that, in *his* time, Clement and Linus were not bishops, but evangelists.

Writing to the Philippians from Rome during his first imprisonment, the apostle entreats some one, whom he calls his "true yoke-fellow"—"help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellow-labourers" (Phil. iv. 3). At this time, then, Clement was at Philippi, not at Rome; and the apostle writes of him as of a *fellow-*

¹ See *antè*, ch. ii.

labourer, probably an evangelist. In his other epistles written at the same period from Rome (those to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon ¹) the apostle does not mention Clement, nor yet in the only letter extant written by him during his last imprisonment at Rome (the second epistle to Timothy ²). “Only Luke” (writes the apostle, while looking forward to the crown of martyrdom)—“Only Luke is with me” (2 Tim. iv. 11). Can we believe that Clement, or any other person, was then bishop of Rome?

Linus, indeed, he mentions in that his last epistle, but only incidentally. “Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren” (2 Tim. iv. 21). Would the apostle have so written, if Linus had then been bishop of Rome? Yet Linus *may* have been an evangelist, and as such known to Timothy.

This reference to St. Paul’s epistles, while it leads us almost necessarily to the conclusion that neither Clement nor Linus was appointed by him bishop of Rome, suggests the following as the correct view of the case.

It seems to me probable, that, till some years after the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, there was no bishop of Rome: that Clement and Linus (per-

¹ These three epistles and the epistle to the Philippians, and no other, seem to have been written during St. Paul’s first imprisonment at Rome. (See Tate’s Cont. Hist. of St. Paul.)

² This epistle, and no other, seems to have been written during the apostle’s second and final imprisonment at Rome. (See Tate’s Cont. Hist. of St. Paul.)

haps Anencletus also) were evangelists, to whom (as to Timothy and Titus) the apostle Paul committed episcopal authority at one time over one city or district, at another time over another: that, in this character, both before and after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, they resided, sometimes one of them, sometimes another, at Rome—Linus being there at the time when the apostle Paul suffered—and as evangelists superintended, *in the absence of all the apostles*, the church in that city, exercising over it episcopal authority: that Clement at length, *in the twelfth year of Domitian*, became the first bishop (the first settled ruler) of the church of Rome: and that, before he so became bishop, while he was at Rome doing the work of an evangelist, he wrote, in the name and with the authority of that church, the epistle to the church at Corinth.

That this is a *probable* view of the case is evident, because it both accounts for the tenor of Clement's epistle to the church of Corinth, and furnishes a clue to the discordancy between Irenæus and Tertullian. These two writers¹ argued against the heretics of their time, that those churches, which could trace back their origin to an apostle, were more likely to have preserved apostolic doctrine, than churches of later date. They, therefore, endeavoured to discover in certain churches an unbroken series of bishops from the time of the apostles, and in particular to exhibit such a series

¹ See *antè*, ch. iii.

in the church of Rome from the time of the apostles Peter and Paul. Clement they both knew to have been at one time bishop of Rome. Tertullian hastily ascribed his appointment to St. Peter: but Irenæus knew that Clement did not become bishop of Rome till some time after St. Peter's martyrdom; and therefore interposed Linus and Anencletus between Peter and Clement—there being *probably* thus much of foundation for both statements, that Clement and Linus were both of them evangelists, and had *as evangelists* severally exercised episcopal authority over the church of Rome at different times prior to the period when Clement became bishop of Rome.

We have, therefore, on the whole, good ground to conclude, that the apostles Peter and Paul did not, before their martyrdom, appoint any bishop over the church of Rome. Nor need this surprise us. We have already,¹ from the epistle of Clement to the church of Corinth and that of Polycarp² to the church of Philippi, gathered that the apostle Paul did not introduce episcopacy (in the modern sense of the word) into either of those churches; and that the latter of those churches, even subsequently to the death of St. John, had no bishop ruling over it, but only presbyters (the same class of ministers as St. Paul addressed by the title of bishops or overseers) and deacons.

Episcopacy, therefore, or the threefold ministry of a bishop presbyters and deacons, as distinguished from

¹ See *antè*, ch. ii.

² *Ibid.*

a ministry of presbyters (all equal in authority) and deacons, was not introduced by the apostles into *all* the churches which they founded. They have left us no *uniform* example as to the institution of episcopacy. No *such* example, as was shown in an earlier part of this work,¹ can be traced in scripture: nor, as we have now seen, can any such example be gathered from the early fathers—even if it could, the circumstance of its not being recorded in scripture would prove, that it was not intended to establish a practice binding on all churches and in all ages.

Another conclusion to be drawn from Eusebius is this:—From the terms in which he relates the appointment of several of the early bishops of the church of Rome, a strong presumption arises, that, in the two first centuries, there existed in that church no settled mode of appointing bishops, no invariable custom of setting apart bishops to their office by imposition of episcopal hands, and that some at least of its early bishops were not so set apart.

¹ See part i. ch. viii.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION.

WHAT then is the result of the evidence on the question of apostolical succession ?

The alleged "*fact of the Apostolical Succession*" (be it remembered) is, "that our Bishops are the heirs and representatives of the Apostles by successive transmission of the prerogative of being so. This" (we are told) "is too notorious to require proof. Every link in the chain is known, from St. Peter to our present Metropolitans."¹ In plain English, the allegation is —*not* that there has been a regular succession of bishops in our church from St. Peter to the present metropolitans—but that *an* EPISCOPAL COMMISSION, *distinct from that of a presbyter*, "the prerogative of being" "heirs and representatives of the apostles," *has been TRANSMITTED to our present metropolitans,*

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 7, p. 2.

through a series of bishops, EACH of whom has received it from his PREDECESSOR IN THE SERIES, by ordination (or consecration) to the episcopate. That this is the meaning is clear from the terms of the proposition itself, and from the whole tenor of the Tracts for the Times.

It rests with those who make this assertion to prove it. Those who call it in question are not required to prove a negative. Yet it must be obvious to any one who has carefully examined the evidence which has been adduced from the early fathers, not only that there is none in favour of the allegation, but that there is much (to say the least) that raises strong presumption against it. This will more fully appear on a review of the evidence.

I. In the writings¹ of the fathers called apostolical, we found no trace of this alleged fact; though Clement of Rome and Ignatius, had there been such a fact, could scarcely have failed to appeal to it. The inference is clear and strong *against* the alleged "*fact of apostolical succession.*" This inference is further strengthened by various passages,² in which Ignatius, while he distinctly refers to the threefold ministry, and exalts very highly the bishop's authority, is so far from representing the bishops as the *only* successors of the apostles, that he not only exhorts the disciples

¹ See *antè*, ch. ii.

² These passages occur in his epistles to *Asiatic* churches. No such passage occurs in his epistle to the church of *Rome*. But of this hereafter. If any one reject these passages as interpolated, I am not concerned to defend them. See Appendix vi.

to follow "the presbytery as" they "would the apostles," and enjoins subjection and reverence to the presbyters "as to the apostles of Jesus Christ," to "the college of the apostles;" but in his epistle to the church of Philadelphia he uses language, which (to say the least) it is not easy to reconcile with the notion of a commission *transmitted* from the apostles to the bishop of that church.

In the epistles of Clement and Polycarp we found ground to infer, that the apostles did not introduce episcopacy into the churches of Corinth and Philippi. But of this hereafter, under Division IV.

II. Proceeding to the writings¹ of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, we found in them no evidence in support of the alleged "fact." We found, in some of them, passages asserting that certain churches could enumerate their bishops in succession from the apostles, but neither intimating how those bishops had been appointed, nor alluding to any transmitted commission: and in one of these passages (one in Tertullian) his argument would have been greatly strengthened, if the *fact* would have warranted him in appealing to such a mode of apostolical succession as is asserted in the Tracts for the Times, and to the transmission thereby of an episcopal commission. From his silence on these points, a strong inference arises, that no *such* succession or transmitted commission was known to him. Nor is this all—for,

¹ See *antè*, ch. iii.

1. Both Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria, in several passages, use interchangeably the words "bishop" and "presbyter:" in other passages, Clement (obviously according to the common language of his day) uses the word "presbyter" as including bishops, and the word "presbytery" as including the office of a bishop: and Irenæus speaks of "that succession of the church which is from the apostles," and of "presbyters" "who have succession from the apostles," "who with the succession of the *episcopate* received according to the Father's pleasure the sure gift of the truth"—not, however, hinting *how* that succession had been continued, and obviously not limiting it to the episcopal line; while in the same passage he plainly intimates his opinion, that succession from the apostles does not constitute a true presbyter without apostolical doctrine and holiness of life.

2. In Irenæus and Tertullian we have discordant testimony as to the first bishop of Rome; but of this hereafter, under Division IV.

III. We next¹ examined Cyprian, who wrote about the middle of the third century. The result was, that, in his time, a custom existed *in some parts* of bishops being elected with the concurrence of the bishops of neighbouring churches, and that these bishops *sometimes* ordained the bishop elect by imposition of hands: but that this custom had not even then been universally adopted in all churches. Nor did it appear to have prevailed from the time of the apostles, even in

¹ See antè, ch. iv.

those churches which then observed it. That the custom mentioned by Cyprian was not universal, was further established by passages from later writers¹ (Eutychius, Severus, and Jerome), proving that, in the church of Alexandria, a different custom had from its foundation been established by St. Mark, and was retained till after the council of Nice in the fourth century. In that church there was a council of twelve presbyters, who, on the death of the bishop or patriarch, chose one of their own number to be his successor, the other eleven laying hands upon him, and placing him on the patriarchal throne. This custom was observed in the church of Alexandria, a principal church of Christendom, for above two centuries from its foundation, and involved the appointment of a whole series of bishops (or patriarchs), who were recognized as such by the universal church, and one of whom was present at the council of Nice.

IV. We examined,² last of all, Eusebius. In his ecclesiastical history (the earliest now extant) we found no evidence in favour of the alleged fact, no notice of the custom mentioned by Cyprian, or of any other custom observed in the appointment of bishops; on the contrary—

1. From the terms, in which Eusebius relates the appointment of several bishops of the church of Rome, we deduced the inference, that, during the two first centuries, there existed in that church no settled mode of making such appointment, no invariable custom of

¹ See *antè*, ch. iv.

² *Ibid.*

setting its bishops apart to their office by imposition of episcopal hands.

2. From a comparison of his account of the first bishops of Rome with the contradictory accounts of them given by Irenæus, Tertullian, and Augustine, combined with inferences previously deduced from the epistles of Clement of Rome and Polycarp, and with the way in which St. Paul writes respecting Clement and Linus, we came to the conclusion, that, until some time after the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, there was no bishop of Rome, or of Corinth, or of Philippi: and that (though we had gathered from the Apocalypse¹ that episcopacy was in the time of the apostle John introduced into many of the Asiatic churches) it was *not universally* introduced into other churches till a later period.

The general result of the inquiry then is, that the alleged "*fact* of apostolical succession," in the sense in which it is alleged and explained in the Tracts for the Times, is utterly unsupported by evidence: and that the fair conclusion to be deduced from the early fathers is against it. That conclusion comprises the following particulars.

1. Episcopacy—in other words, the threefold ministry of a bishop presbyters and deacons—was not introduced by the apostles into *all* the churches founded by them: nor did it become the *universal* form of church government till after the death of the apostle John, as well as of the apostles Peter and Paul.

¹ See *antè*, part i. ch. vi.

Hence arises the presumption, that, for some time after the death of these apostles, the authority to ordain was not limited to any particular order of ministers, but was exercised in each church by the ruling minister or ministers, whether bishop or elders.

2. There is *no* evidence for the hypothesis, that, after episcopacy was introduced into a church, the succession of bishops was *from the first* kept on foot by *each* successive bishop receiving ordination *to the episcopate* from the bishop of some other church who had been ordained in like manner. The preponderance of evidence is against this hypothesis. It clearly was *not* so kept on foot in the church of Alexandria, whose bishops or patriarchs (from its foundation by the evangelist Mark till after the Council of Nice) were not set apart to their office by the laying on of episcopal hands.

3. As to the church of Rome, there is ground to conclude, that it had no bishop till several years after the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul; and that, for some time after the introduction of episcopacy into it, no settled custom prevailed as to the appointment of its bishops, or their being set apart to their office.

I now leave it to the reader to form his own judgment of the bold assertion—"As to the *fact* of the Apostolical Succession, i. e. that our present Bishops are the heirs and representatives of the Apostles by successive transmission of the prerogative of being so, this is too notorious to require proof. Every link in the chain is

known, from St. Peter to our present Metropolitans.”¹ I leave the reader to form his own judgment, whether “this Succession has been preserved, all over the world, amid many revolutions, through many centuries.”²

To me the conclusion resulting from the evidence of the early fathers is clear, that the alleged “*fact* of apostolical succession” is “the baseless fabric of a vision:” while, as was shown in the early part of this work,³ the *doctrine*, in support of which it is asserted, is unscriptural; and “the fact,” therefore, of no value even if it were a fact established in evidence.

What then is the *practical result* to be drawn from the whole inquiry? Let the advocates of either this or the other ecclesiastical platform beware, how they assign to their own views an importance not founded in Scripture. Let them beware, how they rest ecclesiastical authority on an unscriptural foundation, or carry it beyond its scriptural limits. Let those churches, which hold fast “the faith once delivered to the saints,” hold it in “the bond of peace;” exercise towards each other Christian love and brotherly intercourse; and not deny to each other the character of a true church of Christ merely on account of a difference in their constitution or in their orders of the ministry.

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 7, p. 2.

² Ibid. pp. 2, 3.

³ See part i. ch. viii.

APPENDIX.

I.

ON THE DATE OF ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE date of this epistle is fixed by Paley (*Horæ Paulinæ* cap. iii. No. 2, 3, 4, and 5,) towards the close of the apostle's two years residence at Ephesus, recorded in the 19th chapter of Acts. It was clearly written at Ephesus, or he writes : " I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost" (1 Cor. xvi. 8.) ; it was written after several churches had been established in that part of Asia, for he sends salutations from " the churches of Asia" (ib. 19.) ; it was written after the gospel had made considerable progress at Ephesus, for he says : " A great door and effectual is opened unto me" (ib. 9.) ; and consequently it was written, we may reasonably infer, after those remarkable events, the narrative of which St. Luke concludes with the observation—" so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." (Acts xix. 20.) It seems to have been written just after he had sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia (ib. 22.), having himself formed a plan (ib. 21.) of passing through Macedonia and

Achaia to Jerusalem, for he writes to the Corinthians : I have “ sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord. . . . Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will.” (1 Cor. iv. 17—19.) The epistle indeed does not notice Timothy as having been sent into Macedonia on his way to Corinth ; but the apostle says : “ If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear.” (1 Cor. xvi. 10.) He expected, therefore, his letter, though written after Timothy’s departure, to reach Corinth before him ; an expectation easily accounted for by the circuitous route which Timothy took, especially as he had probably to spend some time in visiting the churches of Macedonia.

II.

OUR LORD’S INTERVIEW WITH THE ASSEMBLED DISCIPLES ON THE EVENING OF HIS RESURRECTION.

ST. LUKE XXIV.

36 And as they [the two disciples who had seen the Lord, when travelling to Emmaus] thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

ST. JOHN XX.

19. Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

37. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled ? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts ?

39. Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself : handle me, and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

41. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat ?

42. And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43. And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

20. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

21. Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace *be* unto you : as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost :

23. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted

unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

24. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

In harmonizing these two passages, I have stopped at the 43rd verse in the passage from St. Luke. The 44th verse begins with the words—"and he said unto them—" which may relate to what he said on another occasion; and, as there is no break in the discourse from the 44th to the 49th verse both inclusive, we must either stop at the 43rd verse, or go on to the 49th as if the whole were said on the evening of the resurrection. But in the 49th verse our Lord says, "I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high;" which direction to tarry at Jerusalem, could not have been given on the evening of the resurrection: for on the morning of the same day our Lord had sent a message to his disciples by the women, commanding them to meet him in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.); and after this interview the eleven apostles did meet him in Galilee in a mountain where he had appointed them (Matt. xxviii. 16, 17.); and some of the disciples while fishing on the lake of Tiberias, which is in Galilee, (John vi. 1.) had an interview with Jesus. (John xxi. 1—14.) This direction, therefore, to tarry at Jerusalem, and the whole conversation in which it is included from 44 to 49 of Luke xxiv, must be referred to an interview subsequent to the evening of the resurrection; and the same evangelist obviously alludes to that subsequent interview and direction, when (after mentioning that our Lord had been "seen" of the apostles "forty days,") he tells us, that Jesus, "being assembled toge-

ther with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father ; which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water ; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence ” (Acts i. 1—5.)—*not many days hence*, an expression pointing out a much shorter period than the “forty days” from our Lord’s resurrection to his ascension, shorter than the fifty days from his resurrection to the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

III.

OUR LORD’S LAST COMMISSION TO THE APOSTLES.

It is not easy to fix the date of the different discourses, which our Lord held with the apostles after his resurrection.

St. John records no discourse subsequent to the meeting at the sea of Tiberias. St. Luke (Acts i. 4—8.) records what our Lord said to the apostles immediately before his ascension (ib. v. 9.) ; and also (Luke xxiv. 44—49.) what he said to them at *some* interview subsequent to his appearance on the evening of the resurrection (Appendix II.), and apparently immediately before “he led them out as far as Bethany, and was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.” (Luke xxiv. 50, 51.)

St. Mark records a discourse (xvi. 15—18.) which *seems* also to have been delivered just before our Lord’s ascension ; for it is followed by the narrative of that event—“So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven.” (ib. 19.)—and appar-

ently connected with it: and (as it begins with the words, "And he said") it is not necessarily connected with the preceding narrative, for we have seen (Appendix II.) that St. Luke (xxiv. 44.) commences in the same way a discourse of our Lord not delivered at the time to which the narrative immediately preceding it refers.

St. Matthew makes no mention of our Lord's ascension. He closes his gospel with a discourse (xxviii. 18—20.), which, from the place which it so occupies in his gospel, and the similarity of its subject matter to part of the discourse recorded by St. Mark immediately before the ascension, we may reasonably infer to have been the same discourse.

If I am right in these conclusions, then the four passages to which I have referred (viz. Acts i. 4—8. Luke xxiv. 44—49. Mark xvi. 15—18. Matt. xxviii. 18—20.) all relate to the same interview, viz. our Lord's interview with his apostles immediately before his ascension.

If we consider St. Matthew and St. Mark as recording the same discourse, their accounts of it are properly thus harmonized by Dr. Doddridge.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 15, 16.) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay

hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark xvi. 17, 18.)

St. Mark, it will be seen, records some promises and threatenings not mentioned by St. Matthew; but his account of the commission given to the apostles is more concise.

The only parts of the discourse recorded by St. Luke, which refer to the apostolic commission, are these:—"and he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." (Luke xxiv. 46—48.) "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i. 8.) The apostles were to preach "repentance and remission of sins" in the name of Christ; this was the preaching of the gospel mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark. They were to be witnesses "unto" Christ, and more especially of his resurrection.

IV.

ON THE FOURTY-FOURTH SECTION OF CLEMENT'S EPISTLE.

THIS being considered by Tractarians as an important passage, and a *scrap* of it being quoted at the end of Tract No. 3, I give (1) the original from Jacobson's edition, and (2) Archbishop Wake's translation.

(1.) Καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἐγνώσαν διὰ τῆς Κυρίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ

Χριστῷ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. Διὰ ταύτην οὖν τὴν αἰτίαν πρόγνωσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν, κατέστησαν τοὺς προειρημένους, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομήν δεδώκασιν, ὅπως εἰάν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. Τὰς οὖν κατασταθέντας ὑπ' ἐκείνων, ἢ μεταξὺ ὑφ' ἐτέρων ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν, συνευδοκῆσάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης, καὶ λειτουργήσαντας ἀμέμπτως τῷ ποιμνίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης, ἡσύχως, καὶ ἀβανύσως, μεταμαρτυρημένους τε πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων, τέτους οὐ δικαίως νομίζομεν ἀποβαλέσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας. Ἀμαρτία γὰρ οὐ μικρὰ ἡμῖν ἔσται, εἰάν τῶς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσεγγόντας τὰ δῶρα, τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλωμεν. Μακάριοι οἱ προοδοιορῆσαντες πρεσβύτεροι, οἵτινες ἔγκαρπον καὶ τελείαν ἔσχον τὴν ἀνάλυσιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐυλαβῶνται μή τις αὐτοὺς μεταστήσῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδρυμένου αὐτοῖς τόπου. Ὅρωμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐνίους ὑμεῖς μεταγάγετε καλῶς πολιτευομέν[ους], ἐκ τῆς ἀμέμπτως αὐτοῖς τετιμημένης λειτουργίας. (Clem. ad Cor. 1. 44.)

(2) “ Our apostles knew, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should contentions arise upon account of the ministry. And, therefore, having a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said, and then gave direction how, when they should die, other chosen and approved men should succeed in their ministry. Wherefore we cannot think that those may justly be thrown out of their ministry who were either appointed by them, or afterwards chosen by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole church, and who with all lowliness and innocency ministered to the flock of Christ, in peace and without self-interest, and were for a long time commended by all. For it would be no small sin in us, should we cast off those from their ministry who holily, and without blame, fulfil the duties of it. Blessed are those priests who, having finished their course before these times, have obtained a fruitful and perfect dissolution ; for they have no fear lest any one should turn them

out of the place which is now appointed for them. But we see how you have put out some who lived reputably among you from the ministry, which by their innocence they had adorned." (Archbishop Wake's Translation.)

The first part of this passage is thus rendered in the Tracts for the Times No. 3.

"The Apostles knew, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that strife would arise for the Episcopate. Wherefore having received an accurate foreknowledge, they appointed the men I before mentioned, and have given an orderly succession, that on their death other approved men might receive in turn their office."

The word, here rendered "episcopate," and by Wake "ministry" in his text and "bishopric" in his note, I have translated (more literally) "overseership." The word admits of this rendering: and the context proves that the office of bishop, *as distinguished from that of presbyter*, is not meant by the word in this place. But the Tractarian translator has omitted the rest of the section, and has not furnished the passage in which Clement had mentioned the men appointed by the apostles.

The words *τῶς προειρημένες* are, however, more correctly translated in the Tract than by Wake.

The word *ἐπινομήν*, rendered "direction" by Wake, and "orderly succession" in the Tract, has occasioned considerable discussion, as may be seen on referring to Jacobson's note upon it—Wake in a note gives this translation—"Left a list of other chosen and approved persons, who should succeed them in the ministry."

I have in the text followed the Tract in translating *λειτουργία* "office:" but the result would be the same, if with Archbishop Wake we render it "ministry."

V.

ON A PASSAGE IN IGNATIUS' EPISTLE TO THE TRALLIANS.

THE passage quoted in the text is thus given in Jacobson's edition.

Πάντες ἐντρεπέσθωσιν τοὺς διακόνους, ὡς Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, ὡς καὶ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον, ὅντα υἱὸν τοῦ Πατρός. τοὺς δὲ πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς συνέδριον Θεοῦ, καὶ ὡς σύνδεσμον ἀποστόλων. Χωρὶς τῶτων ἐκκλησία οὐ καλεῖται.

Annexed, Mr. Jacobson gives the ancient version apparently derived from a different text. The passage has sorely perplexed commentators and translators, who all, as we gather from Mr. Jacobson's note, treat the text as corrupt: and many conjectural emendations have been suggested.

Neither the translator in the "Records of the Church" No. V., nor Archbishop Wake, has ventured to give a literal version of τὸν ἐπίσκοπον, ὅντα υἱὸν τοῦ Πατρός, the former rendering it—"to the bishop as to the son of the Father;" the latter—"the bishop as the Father." Each has obviously followed some conjectural emendation of the text.

The passage, especially the part which relates to the deacons and bishop, is obviously corrupt, and such as Ignatius could not have written; and the concluding sentence is strange Greek. I strongly suspect that the whole is interpolated.

VI.

ON THE EPISTLES OF IGNATIUS.

In examining the epistles of Ignatius, I have not entered into the controversy (which has long existed) as to their genuineness. I have met the advocates of Apostolic Succession on their own ground ; and conceded the genuineness of the seven epistles, the Greek of which has been edited by Mr. Jacobson, and which have been long since translated by Archbishop Wake, and a version of which is printed in the Tracts for the Times under the division of Records of the Church. But, since my observations on those epistles were written, a work has appeared, entitled “The Antient Syriac Version of the Epistles of Saint Ignatius,” and edited by Mr. Cureton with an English translation and other collateral matter. This version (which comprises only three epistles, those to Polycarp, to the Ephesians, and to the Romans) is found in some very antient Syriac manuscripts lately brought by Mr. Tattam from a monastery in the Desert of Nitria, and deposited in the British Museum : and it differs from the Greek of the epistles addressed to the same individual and churches in two respects : first, several passages, some of them long passages, which are found in the Greek, are wanting in the Syriac ; and secondly, a passage is found in the Syriac version of the epistle to the Romans, which, in the Greek, forms no part of that epistle but constitutes the principal part of the fourth and fifth chapters of the epistle to the Trallians.

Mr. Cureton, in his preface, discusses in a very able argument the question between the Syriac version, and the Greek text, which we have of the same three epistles : and has come to the conclusion, first, that the passages want-

ing in the Syriac version have been interpolated in the Greek manuscript since that version was made; and secondly, that the passage, which in the Greek manuscript forms the fourth and fifth chapters of the epistle to the Trallians, is in its proper place in the Syriac version of the epistle to the Romans. Mr. Cureton's arguments *in general* appear to me satisfactory: and, if his conclusion is correct, this circumstance strengthens the suspicions which have long hung about passages in the other epistles of a similar tendency to those interpolated in these three, and also casts great doubt on the genuineness of the whole epistle to the Trallians as it now stands in the Greek.

Such is the impression made on my mind by Mr. Cureton's publication: but I would not be understood as expressing any decided opinion on the subject. I leave the determination to those, who are more accustomed to such inquiries.

Nor is a decision on the question material to my present purpose. All the passages, to which I have referred in discussing the epistles of Ignatius, are taken from those four epistles which are not included in the Syriac version—except two, the one being a passage found in the epistle to Polycarp both in the Greek and in the Syriac; the other being an immaterial passage in the second chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians as it stands in the Greek, but which is not found in the Syriac. And the several passages from the epistles to the Smyrneans, the Philadelphians, and the Trallians on which I have commented, have (I trust) been shown to afford no countenance to the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, however high they exalt the bishop's authority. They are, indeed, much stronger in support of episcopal authority than any of the passages, which are considered as interpolated because not found in the Syriac; and it was on that account, that I selected them for examination. Whatever suspicion may, either

from internal evidence or from the apparent interpolation of similar passages in other epistles, rest upon them, I am content, that the advocates of Apostolical Succession should have the full benefit of them. They furnish (as I think I have shown) no evidence in support of the alleged "*fact of Apostolical Succession.*"

There is one point, which it remains for me to notice. I have said, that I cannot, "in the epistles of Ignatius, discover any intimation as to the way in which ministers were in his time appointed, except the obscure passage in his epistle to the church of Smyrna which has been already examined." But Mr. Cureton, with reference to chapters vii. and viii., of the epistle to Polycarp as they stand in the Greek (though the passage is wanting in the Syriac) says: "In these we find, besides other things, instructions given to Polycarp by Ignatius as to the manner in which he was to proceed in choosing one to be sent to Syria to take his place." (Pref. xxvii.) It never occurred to me to understand the passage as relating to the appointment of a bishop of Antioch: nor, on consideration, do I see how it can be so understood. These instructions, as translated from the Greek in the Tracts for the Times, run thus. "It is meet, O most blessed Polycarp, that thou shouldst call together a holy council, and choose some one, well beloved and zealous, that he may be called God's Messenger; and to appoint him to go to Syria, that he may make manifest your zealous love, to the glory of CHRIST. A Christian is not master of himself, but is devoted to God's service. This work is God's, and your's, when you have accomplished it. . . . I salute all by name; and especially the wife of Epitropus, with her household and family. . . . I salute him who shall be chosen to go into Syria; that the grace of God may be with him always." And this translation gives sufficiently the purport of the Greek. Now the person so to be chosen and sent to Antioch is called

neither bishop, nor angel, but Θεοδρόμος, a messenger or courier of God; nor is any episcopal function assigned to him. His only office is, "that he may make manifest" the "zealous love" of the church of Smyrna. Nor, as the passage runs in the Greek, is there any intimation that he was to go to Antioch to take the place of Ignatius. The passage, indeed, as translated by Mr. Cureton from the Syriac, stands thus. "The Christian has not power over himself, but is ready to be subjected to God. I salute him who is deemed worthy to go to Antioch in my stead, as I charged thee"—the long passage in the Greek having in the Syriac nothing to correspond to it but these two sentences; while the words, "in my stead, as I charged thee," have nothing to answer to them in the Greek. In a note on the words "as I charged thee," Mr. Cureton says: "St. Ignatius alludes to his instructions to St. Polycarp relative to sending a Bishop as his successor to Antioch, which probably he had given him when they met at Smyrna" (p. 88. n. 35.) Mr. Cureton does not, I conceive, mean directions such as are represented in the Greek, for these (he says) "seem more consonant with the practice of rather later times." (Pref. p. xxviii.) Nor do I see any very solid ground for considering the words as alluding to the appointment of a successor to Ignatius. If such be the allusion, the passage as it stands in the Syriac conveys no intimation *how* the successor was to be appointed, or *by whom* he was to be "deemed worthy to go to Antioch in" his "stead." We must take our choice between the Syriac and the Greek. If we adopt the Syriac, we have no hint as to the *mode* of appointment (even if the appointment was intended) of a successor to Ignatius. If, on the other hand, we retain the Greek text, we have not the slightest ground for considering that the person to be chosen by the council was to succeed Ignatius or go to Antioch in his stead: but the direction would rather seem to be,

that a council of the church at Smyrna should be called together, to choose a representative of that church and send him to Antioch, to the church of which city other churches were sending representatives, "some bishops, some priests and deacons" for a similar purpose, viz. to "rejoice with them when met together, and glorify the name" of God. (See Ign. Ep. to Philad. § 10.) Surely it was not for the church of Smyrna to elect and send a bishop to preside over the much more ancient church of Antioch!

VII.

TERTULLIAN ON DISCIPLINE.

"Cogimur ad litterarum divinarum commemorationem . . . ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et censura divina, nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de dei conspectu; summumque futuri iudicii præjudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis et conventus et omnis sancti commercii relegetur. Præsident probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio, sed testimonio adepti." (Apol. cap. 39.)

VIII.

TERTULLIAN ON SUCCESSION FROM THE APOSTLES.

The passages to which I allude in the text, are the three following; ¹ the two first being found in a Treatise which bishop Kaye considers as having probably been written while Tertullian continued in the church; and the third being found in a work which he thinks was certainly written after Tertullian became a Montanist, though I can scarcely understand how the passage could have been written by one who had seceded from the churches which traced succession back to the apostles.

1. After quoting Matt. xiii. 37, 39, Tertullian argues thus. “Ex ipso ordine manifestatur id esse dominicum et verum, quod sit prius traditum. Id autem extraneum et falsum, quod sit posterius immissum. Ea sententia manebit adversus posteriores quasque hæreses. . . . Cæterum si quæ audent interserere se ætati apostolicæ, ut ideo videantur ab Apostolis traditæ, quia sub Apostolis fuerunt; possumus dicere, edant ergo origines ecclesiarum suarum: evolvant ordinem episcoporum suorum, ita per successiones ab initio decurrente,² ut primus ille episcopus aliquem ex Apostolis, vel Apostolicis viris: qui tamen, cum Apostolis perseveraverit, habuerit autorem et antecessorem. Hoc enim modo ecclesiæ Apostolicæ census suos deferunt, sicut Smyrnæorum ecclesia Polycarpum ab Johanne conlocatum refert: sicut Romanorum Clementem³ a Petro ordinatum, id et proinde utique et cæteræ exhibent, quos Apostoli⁴ in

¹ I have given in the notes *some* only of the various readings; those which seemed to me, to throw light on the text.

² “Decurrentem.” Fran. Paris. Rigalt.

³ Here Tertullian differs from Irenæus. See part ii. chap. iv.

⁴ “Ab apostolis.” Franc. Paris. Rigalt.

episcopatum constitutos, Apostolici seminis traduces habeant. Confinquant tale aliquid hæretici. Quid enim illis post blasphemiam illicitum est? sed etsi confinxerint, nihil promovebunt. Ipsa enim doctrina eorum, cum Apostolica comparata, ex diversitate et contrarietate sua pronuntiabit, neque Apostoli alicujus autoris esse neque Apostolici: quia sicut Apostoli non diversa inter se docuissent, ita et Apostolici non contraria Apostolis edidissent: nisi illi qui ab Apostolis desciverunt, et aliter prædicaverunt. Ad hanc itaque formam provocabuntur¹ ab illis ecclesiis, quæ licet nullam² ex Apostolis vel Apostolicis autorem suum proferant, ut multo posteriores, quæ denique quotidie instituuntur: tamen in eadem fide conspirantes, non minus Apostolicæ deputantur pro consanguinitate doctrinæ. Ita omnes hæreses, ad utramque formam nostris ecclesiis provocatæ, probent se quaquā putant Apostolicas. Sed adeo nec sunt, nec possunt probare, quod non sunt: nec recipiuntur in pacem et communicationem ab ecclesiis, quoquo modo Apostolicis: scilicet ob diversitatem sacramenti, nullo modo Apostolicæ (De Præscrip, Hæret. cap. 31, 32.)

I give this passage as I find it—I pass by for the present the question, how far the variation between Tertullian and Irenæus respecting the first bishop of Rome may affect the credibility of their evidence as to the fact of a regular succession of bishops from the time of the apostles to their time. I merely observe, that the passage neither alludes to any apostolical commission, nor in any way intimates *how* the succession of bishops had been continued in the churches which he calls Apostolical. The argument, which he deduces from a succession of bishops beginning with one constituted by an apostle, is simply this—that a church having such a succession, is thereby proved to have been

¹ “Probabuntur.” Rigalt.

² “Nullam.” So in Ed. Semler.

founded by an apostle; and that a church so founded by an apostle—not the bishop of that church—is the depository of the apostle's doctrine.

That this is his argument will appear from the next passage which I cite, and which is found earlier in the same treatise.

2. After mentioning the appointment of Matthias and his being added to the eleven surviving apostles, he says of the apostles: "*Primo per Judæam contestata fide in Jesum Christum, ecclesiis institutis, dehinc in orbem profecti: eandem doctrinam ejusdem fidei nationibus promulgaverunt. Et proinde ecclesias apud unamquamque civitatem condiderunt; a quibus traducem fidei et semina doctrinæ, cæteræ exinde ecclesiæ mutuatae sunt, et quotidie mutantur, ut ecclesiæ fiant. Ac per hoc et ipsæ apostolicæ deputabuntur,¹ ut soboles Apostolicarum ecclesiarum. Omne genus ad originem suam censeatur necesse est; Itaque tot ac tantæ ecclesiæ, una est; illa ab Apostolis prima, ex qua omnes. Sic omnes primæ, et omnes Apostolicæ, dum una; omnes probant unitatem. Communicatio pacis, et appellatio fraternitatis, et contessaratio hospitalitatis: quæ jura non alia ratio regit, quam ejusdem sacramenti una traditio. Hinc igitur dirigimus præscriptionem: Si dominus Jesus Christus apostolos misit ad prædicandum, alios non esse recipiendos prædicatores, quam quos Christus instituit, quia nec alius Patrem novit, nisi filius, et cui filius revelavit:² nec aliis videtur revelasse filius, quam apostolis, quos misit ad prædicandum; utique quod illis revelavit. Quid autem prædicaverint, id est, quid illis Christus revelaverit: et hic præscribam, non aliter probari debere, nisi per easdem ecclesias, quas ipsi Apostoli condiderunt, ipsi eis prædicando; tam viva (quod aiunt) voce,*

¹ "Deputantur." Paris. Rigalt.

² Tertullian obviously refers to Matt. xi. 27.; but I see no reason for restricting the words to the apostles, as he does. Our Lord used the same language on the return of the seventy. Luke x. 22.

quam per epistolas postea." (Præsc. in Hæret. cap 20, 21.)

In this passage Tertullian (I stop not to consider how conclusively) argues, that the *churches* (he does *not* say the *bishops* of the churches) founded by the apostles are the depositories of the doctrine of the apostles: whence we may infer, that, in the former passage, he mentions the succession of bishops from the apostles merely as evidence of a church having been so founded,

3. " In summa, si constat id verius quod prius, id prius quod et ab initio, ab initio quod ab Apostolis; pariter utique constabit, id esse ab Apostolis traditum, quod apud ecclesias Apostolorum fuerit sacrosanctum. Videamus quod lac a Paulo Corinthii hauserint; ad quam regulam Galatæ sint reorrecti; quid legant Philippenses, Thessalonicenses, Ephesii; quid etiam Romani de proximo sonent, quibus evangelium et Petrus et Paulus sanguine quoque suo signatum reliquerunt. Habemus et Johannis alumnas ecclesias. Nam, et si Apocalypsin ejus Marcion respuit; ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recens, in Johannem stabit autorem. Sic et cæterarum generositas recognoscitur. Dico itaque apud illas, nec solas jam Apostolicas, sed apud universas, quæ illis de societate sacramenti confœderantur, id evangelium Lucæ ab initio editionis suæ stare, quod cum maxime tuemur. Marcionis vero plerisque nec notum, nullis notum, ut non eodem natum.¹ Habet plane et illud ecclesias, sed suas, tam posteras quam adulteras, quarum si censem requiras, facilius apostaticum invenias quam Apostolicum, Marcione scilicet conditore, vel aliquo de Marcionis examine. Faciunt favos et vespæ, faciunt ecclesias et Marcionitæ. Eadem autoritas ecclesiarum Apostolicarum, cæteris quoque patrociniabitur evangeliis, quæ proinde per illas et secundum illas habemus, Johannis dico et Matthæi; licet et Marcus quod

¹ "Eo damnatum." Paris. Rig. Fran.

edidit Petri affirmetur, cujus interpres Marcus. Nam et Lucæ digestum, Paulo adscribere solent; capit magistrorum videri, quæ discipuli promulgarint. Itaque et de his Marcion flagitandus, quod¹ omissis eis, Lucæ potius institerit; quasi non et hæc apud ecclesias a primordio fuerint, quemadmodum et Lucæ? . . . Igitur dum constet, hæc quoque apud ecclesias fuisse, cur non hæc quoque Marcion attigit, aut emendanda, si adulterata; aut agnoscenda, si integra? Nam et competit, ut siqui evangelium pervertebant, eorum magis curarent perversionem, quorum sciebant auctoritatem receptiorem. . . . In quantum ergo emendasset, quæ fuissent emendanda si fuissent corrupta; in tantum confirmavit non fuisse corrupta, quæ non putavit emendanda. Denique emendavit, quod corruptum existimavit. Sed nec hoc merito; quia non fuit corruptum. Si enim Apostolica" (scil. the gospels *written* by Apostles) "integre² decucurrerunt, Lucæ autem, quod est secundum nos, adeo congruit regulæ eorum, ut cum illis apud ecclesias maneat; jam et Lucæ constat integrum decucurrisse, usque ad sacrilegium Marcionis. Denique ubi manus illi Marcion intulit, tunc diversum et æmulum factum est Apostolicis." (Adv. Marcion. Lib. iv. cap. 5.)

I have quoted this passage at length for several reasons. 1. To show that Tertullian, when he states that the Apostolic churches can trace their line of bishops back to the apostles, states it, not to prove episcopacy an apostolical institution, but to prove that the churches from which the heretics had seceded were of apostolic foundation; and thence to establish (against the errors and corruptions of those heretics) the apostolicity of the doctrines of those churches and the genuineness of the Scriptures received by them. 2. To show, that this passage affords no evidence in favour of Apostolical succession in the Tractarian sense.

¹ "Quid." Cod. Wouwer.

² "Integra." Latin.

3. To shew that Bingham has misinterpreted the expression—"ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recens, in Johannem stabit autorem," when (quoting it as evidence¹ that the order of bishops was "an original settlement of the apostles themselves, which they made by divine appointment,") he renders it—"the order of bishops when traced up to its original will be found to have St. John for one of its authors." The context proves, that by "ordo episcoporum" Tertullian meant, *not the order of bishops* as distinct from others of the clergy; the sense in which Bingham quotes the words—but *the succession of individual bishops*, which in the churches founded by St. John could be reckoned back from the time when Tertullian wrote to the first bishop of each church appointed by the apostle; and for further evidence of this being his meaning, I may refer to the use of the expression "ordo episcoporum" in the first passage quoted in this Appendix, and to the use of the word "census," both in that passage and in this, in the classical sense of roll or register.

¹ On the appointment of bishops by the apostles. See part i. chap. vi. I am here discussing not the question of fact, but the bearing of the passage quoted by Bingham.

IX.

CYPRIAN ON TRADITION AND SCRIPTURE.

Stephen bishop of Rome, writing against the rebaptism of those who had received baptism from heretics, had (as Cyprian tells us) said—"If any come over to us from any heresy whatsoever, let no innovations be made in the custom handed down to us from tradition; and therefore let such persons be received by imposition of hands, in order to their penance." Cyprian, who held baptism by a heretic invalid, quotes this statement as made by Stephen, and replies, "Whence, I would ask, have we this tradition? Do we derive it from the immediate authority of our Lord himself in the gospel? Or cometh it down to us from the directions of the apostles in any of their epistles? FOR GOD HATH MOST PLAINLY GIVEN US TO UNDERSTAND THAT HIS WRITTEN WILL IS TO BE FOLLOWED." And, after quoting Joshua i. 8. and Matt. xxviii. 20., he adds—"If then there be any where extant, either in the gospel itself, or in the epistles or acts of the apostles, an express direction, that hereticks should not be baptized, but only receive imposition of hands, in order to their penance, let such an holy and heavenly tradition be, by all means, observed." (Ep. lxxiv. to Pompeius, Part ii. 245.) In this passage, it is clear, Cyprian rejects all tradition, except the *written* word.

THE END.

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